

the BUNEFOLDER

an e-journal for the book binder and book artist



Bexx Caswell's binding of *Leaves of Grass* by Walt Whitman; Illustrations by Jim Spanfeller. Hallmark, 1969. From the 2009 Bind-O-Rama.

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The Thread That Binds: Interviews with private practice bookbinders

By Pamela Train Leutz

The Thread That Binds: Interviews with Private Practice Bookbinders began in 2005 as a journey I took to discover what led people to become bookbinders in private practice. As a part-time bookbinder for 30 years, I yearned to make private practice bookbinding my vocation. I had good teachers and considered myself to be a good bookbinder, but had doubts about my ability to make it my living. Were my skills good enough? Did I have the business sense and toughness required? Would I be able to support myself?

I wanted to find out where independent bookbinders were trained, how they liked their chosen career, what they considered the pros and cons of their business, what their character was like. I chose bookbinders whom I admired and made a living at it. For four years I spent my vacation time from my full-time administrative position at a university traveling around the country, interviewing bookbinders in their studios. (A couple I interviewed in my then hometown of Dallas, and one I interviewed at a GBW meeting with the intent to visit later.).

The result is a compilation of 20 interviews with independent bookbinders such as Tini Miura, Jan Sobota, Don Glaister, Eleanore Ramsey, Tim Ely, Monique Lallier, Daniel Kelm, Priscilla Spitler, and others, and with a special interview with Don Etherington. The book, *The Thread That Binds: Interviews with Private Practice Bookbinders*, published by Oak Knoll Press, will be available in January, 2010. Information on the book can be found at <<http://www.oakknoll.com>>.

The interview that follows is with Craig Jensen of San Marcos, TX. It was conducted in April, 2006.

Craig Jensen: The Road Back to "Two Guys in a Garage"

The elusive Craig Jensen. A couple of times, many years ago, I visited BookLab, a bindery in Austin run and co-owned by Craig, where the Lone Star Chapter of the Guild of Book Workers occasionally held meetings. There I met bookbinders Priscilla Spitler and Gary Frost, and even esteemed publisher W. Thomas Taylor, but I never met Craig. I thought of him as this unseen mystery man. In the summer of 2006, after BookLab was no more, I finally met him in Iowa at a book arts event organized to remember and honor master bookbinder,

William Anthony. Craig is very friendly with a warm smile that reflects a hint of humor. A long grey braid falls down his back; his eyes are blue as sky. He agreed to be interviewed, so I traveled to his home/bindery in the unincorporated countryside outside of San Marcos, TX, just south of Austin. A long lane leads to his contemporary home, beautifully landscaped with native plants, and with a swimming pool on one side. A vintage 1942 Gibson guitar leans against a wall in the dining room where we sit. Craig used to play long ago, and he still fantasizes about being in a band. He seems to have passed on his musical talents – his son builds guitars; his daughter plays double bass.



It seems that bookbinding chose Craig more than he chose it. After two years of missionary work in Asia, he enrolled as a student at Brigham Young University. An Asian Studies major, he became interested in BYU's extensive collection of books on papermaking and studied all the Dard Hunter books on the subject. Craig's interest in papermaking was noticed by the curator of special collections. Bookbinding wasn't on his mind when the curator encouraged him to apply for the job of book conservator at BYU. He was offered and accepted the job, and the library agreed to pay him to travel to various places to work and learn with master bookbinders. Craig eventually interned at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., where he met Don Etherington.

He returned to BYU and developed their book conservation program, working there for five years. He then took a job as book conservator at the University of Texas Humanities Research Center, where Don Etherington was then head of the conservation center.

Craig excelled at bookbinding. His ability to develop and execute solutions for complex binding projects made him well respected in the field. Leaving institutional life, he started Jensen Bindery (euphemistically called “two guys in a garage”) with good friend, Gary McLarren, in a cramped garage. Four years later, with the support of two financial partners, he started BookLab, Inc. in Austin.

As the business continued to grow and change, BookLab consumed his life. After ten years he was ready to get out. Following the closing of the company, he continued an association with one of the partners doing software consulting. He hadn't been working at the bench, and with the exception of a few colleagues, he had not been in contact with the world of bookbinders. “I lost myself...” With his wife's blessing, Craig took off on a road trip to find direction. He traveled rural roads, camped, played music, visited old friends, spent time in solitude. He returned home still uncertain about what he wanted to do. After considering various book conservation jobs around the country, he relocated to San Marcos and set up BookLab II in his home with the help of Sabina Daly. A few years later, after Sabina moved on to other ventures, Craig re-established contact with Gary McLarren, and “two guys in a garage” were reunited. About 22 years after their original start, he came full circle. Craig has folded himself into the bookbinding community again with his fun-loving nature, his excellence at bookbinding, his sharp mind, and his innovative ideas.

How did you become a bookbinder? What led you to bookbinding?

College meltdown. I didn't know what I was doing in school. I was at Brigham Young University in the early 70's as an Asian studies major. I didn't know what I was going to do with that. There wasn't much you could do with it back then. I was always looking for something to distract myself with. I stumbled onto an article by Catherine and Howard Clark in a craft encyclopedia on papermaking and I thought, “Well, that will be fun to do.” So I researched papermaking. There were some bibliography titles with the Clarks' article, which led me to a large number of Dard Hunter and Henry Morris books in BYU's special collections. These books were completely handmade and were an eye opener. BYU had a big fine press collection, but nobody had ever looked at them or used them. I was actually the first person to look at many of those books.

I eventually made a paper mold. I went to a sheet-metal shop and had them make me a vat. I bought pulp and started making paper. In the course of my dabbling in papermaking for 6-7 months, one day the curator, Chad Flake, said to me, “We have this position for a book conservator. Why don't you

apply for it? I think you'd be really good at it.” That didn't interest me at first, because I didn't even know what it was. But he kept bugging me to consider the job. At some point when I was feeling particularly despondent about college and what I was doing there, I thought, what the heck, I'll apply for it. The position had been open for a year. They hired me. I had no experience; I didn't know what I was doing. They said, “We'll send you anywhere you need to go to study and learn. We'll pay for it and you'll have a salary.”

There were only a handful of book conservators then. There was no such position as preservation administrator. The Columbia Preservation and Conservation Studies program didn't even start until 1980. BYU hired me because they thought my interest in papermaking was close enough, and I had a pulse. I think Chad went to A. Dean Larsen, who eventually became my boss, and said, “There is this kid here who might be able to do this.” Who knows? Their hiring me didn't have anything to do with what I might have demonstrated except a knack for craft and handwork. I was spending hours up there pouring over an almost complete collection of Dard Hunter books. Chad said, “Come here and let me show you something else in the vault.” There were all these Grabhorn Press books and a complete run of Bird and Bull Press books. I started looking at the bindings and thinking, “These are beautiful.” But it still hadn't clicked yet.

When I got into the book world there was no school to go to in the US. There were places to go in Europe and in England, like where Priscilla Spitler, Peter Verheyen and Frank Mowery went. But there was nowhere to go and study in the states. It was strictly if someone would take you in. So I went to Capricornus School of Bookbinding in Berkeley and studied with Anne and Theo Kahle for three months. I worked with Paul Folger at the Mormon Church Historians Office in Salt Lake and later at the University of Utah. I went to many one-week and two-week workshops wherever I could get them. In between workshops, I worked full-time and continued my undergraduate studies.

The second year of my employment they sent me to Library of Congress. Dean Larsen met Fraser Poole of the Library of Congress at an ALA [American Library Association] meeting and said, “We've got this young guy who we've hired to be our book conservator, but he needs some training and experience.” Fraser said he'd take me if I stayed for one year. So I went to Library of Congress as an intern for a year in the employ of BYU. That is where I met Don Etherington.

Are you a supporter of workshop training?

I am if it is like it was back then where people take you in and really teach you something. But if it is a weekend warrior

workshop, no. It was when someone would let me come and stay with them, and I would work there, that I learned. When I worked with Paul Folger I commuted every day to Salt Lake City and worked with him full time in the shop. Then of course, there was the year at Library of Congress. During that year Tom Albrow, the head of book conservation, would oversee my work during the day. Also, many evenings, Tom would also let me work at his home bindery doing private work. It was an intense year of training.

After I returned to Utah, I continued working at Brigham Young until September of 1981, when I moved to Texas.

It sounds like you fell into bookbinding because someone offered you a position. Is there anything in your past that would have suggested that you would be interested in bookbinding?

That is interesting. I actually made a book right after high school. I made an accordion book. I found it a number of years ago and I still have it. It was all stuck together with tape, but it was an accordion book in a slipcase. When I was in grade school and made reports, I always labored over those things and spent a lot of time on them; I never just stuck them in a three ring binder. So maybe that is a connection.

Did you have an art background?

I've always dabbled in art. I never majored in art. The thing about this story is that I was raised as a Mormon and that is why I was at BYU. Two of the years that I would have been in college I was on a Mormon mission to Hong Kong, which is why I was majoring in Asian studies; I had all that language training because I had lived in Hong Kong for two years while everyone else was going to college. I attended one semester of college in Southern California before my mission. I attended BYU for about a year and a half as a student and then I got the job as conservator; then I finished maybe another three quarters of a year. If I had stayed in school I would have been a senior. The field really pulled me away from it. The last class I took while I was working was organic chemistry. I couldn't see any reason to take more unrelated classes at that point in my career. I was so busy working: I got to design and build a lab; I was hiring people; I had a staff; I was building the program.

It was unique. I'm still very proud of the program there. After I left the Mormon Church, it became very difficult to be there. You can be a non-Mormon and work there, but you really can't be an ex-Mormon. I had evolved intellectually, and spiritually, if you will, to where I didn't fit in anymore. So when I decided to leave I had to recruit my replacement, because otherwise they would have been in the same boat they were in five years before, when they hired me.

I had built the program up from a Scotch-tape repair station to a serious, well-developed conservation program with a rare book conservation lab and a repair unit. I think we had 12 people working there then. I recruited and helped convince Robert Espinosa to take the job. He was at Library of Congress, and we had become friends through AIC [American Institute for Conservation]. As a non-Mormon Robert did not face the same issues that I had as an ex-Mormon.

In the meantime, Don Etherington had heard I was tired of Utah and wanted to do something different. He asked me if I was interested in coming to the University of Texas. My wife, Ann, and I came out and interviewed and fell in love with Austin. Don hired me as the head of the book conservation section. I worked there for a little over three years but I burned out on institutional life. Shortly after I left UT in 1984, I started Jensen Bindery and did a few small editions, but mostly book conservation and box making and a fair amount of on-site consulting, condition surveys, and things like that. I soon hired Gary McLerran, who had been working at the Humanities Research Center (HRC); we referred to ourselves, tongue in cheek, as "two guys in a garage."

Around that time I met Gabriel Rummonds at the HRC. He had sold a complete collection of Plain Wrapper Press books to Decherd Turner. Gabriel called me up one day and said, "I have this book I'm working on, and we're starting the book arts program at the University of Alabama. Would you come down and consult with me on the book, the program, and the lab?" So I said, "Sure, I'll come down and check it out." In the course of working out some structural issues on the book, I became quite interested in doing the edition myself. I asked, "Who is going to do the binding?" He said, "Well, I don't know. I don't really have any binders I like right now." I said, "Why don't you let me do it?" He said, "Oh, it will be too repetitive, you'll get bored." I said, "No, I think I would really like to bind the edition." He agreed. I wasn't really considering being an edition binder at the time. I thought of myself as a book conservator. But because Gabriel let me do this book, the last Plain Wrapper Press imprint, it immediately put my name on the map as someone who could do high quality edition work. Gabriel is notoriously critical of his binders. He started telling everybody what a good job I did and that I was good to work with. Suddenly I wasn't a book conservator anymore; I was a limited edition bookbinder. When I met Priscilla Spitler, she had heard about me from my doing the book for Gabriel. She and Pam Smith were doing a road tour, and they came through Austin. Here we were in this little 200-square-foot garage, me and Gary McLerran. They were shocked. That is the reader's digest version of how I got into bookbinding.

So after Jensen Bindery you started BookLab with two others?

Paul Parisi and Jim Larsen, who own Acme Bookbinding and Bridgeport Bindery (I didn't know all the details at the time), were contemplating merging their two companies. They thought that they would start a separate company to see how they worked together. A mutual friend of theirs had recommended me as a person to perhaps head up that company. Paul Parisi called me and asked if I was interested in going to work for them. Jensen Bindery was about 4 years old at that time, at the end of '87. Paul asked me to come see him in Boston.

I think I was on my way to New York to teach a summer workshop at the Columbia Preservation and Conservation Studies program. The workshop covered things that I thought conservators should know about running a business, even if they were in an institutional setting – how to be productive, how to move things through the shop, how to account for your time, and stuff like that. At BYU, if I wanted new equipment or any kind of growth for the program, I had to show them that I increased my productivity over the previous year. They had a metric that they imposed on me to show growth in production, both in repair and conservation treatments. That was the reason I taught that workshop about the business of conservation at Columbia.

I said to Paul that I was not interested in a job, but I might be interested in a partnership. Our business needed some money at the time. We had grown quite a bit and we needed some cash to expand. It was hard to get money from banks for what we were doing.

By the time I hooked up with Jim and Paul and formed the partnership we called BookLab in 1988, Jensen Bindery had almost completely abandoned library work. We were doing almost all limited editions. The only things we did for libraries were production runs of boxes. We had gotten completely out of the conservation side of things. In 1988, BookLab began to take a fresh look at library services. That was when we got into preservation photocopying. Gary Frost came shortly after and was the fourth partner. We also did what we called "collection maintenance repair" – a book repair treatment between rare book conservation and library binding.

Did you burn out?

Oh, did I ever burn out! At the end the partnership wasn't working either. We were competitors more than we were partners. We were competing at the end and it was an unfair advantage for them, because they had much stronger, bigger companies and access to capital that BookLab didn't have. And because of the partnership arrangement I couldn't go

out for capital myself without having board approval. My hands were tied behind my back for expanding BookLab, which I really wanted to do, particularly in the digital realm. The combination of having a dysfunctional partnership and burning out caused me to approach the partners. I told them I was either going to resign or shut BookLab down and asked them what their preference was. They said, "Shut it down." The last three months of '98 we sold everything.

Did you have a separate place to work when BookLab closed?

When BookLab closed I didn't do anything. I just holed up at home and tried to regroup mentally. In the meantime Paul Parisi, one of the former partners, offered me a job in Boston. I didn't want to move, so I telecommuted from Austin. He picked up most of BookLab's imaging business and the facsimile business. I went to work for him. I set up half of the front room in our house as an office. I had a scanner there and a couple of computers. I designed and maintained Acme's website. I started working with some of the imaging software and hardware companies to ensure that their systems worked for book production as opposed to office systems. I got really involved in that for about three years as a consultant for Acme with one particular software company. I went to Boston periodically and worked with the imaging staff, setting up their workflow and installing equipment. Then I burned out again. I think Paul burned out on me too. He wanted me to move to Boston. We seriously looked at it. Ann and I went out there and house shopped, but when I told him what he would need to pay me in order to make a lateral move from the Austin to Boston cost of living, he said that wasn't going to work, so I resigned. That was about a year before we moved to San Marcos.

I didn't do anything for a while and probably had the kind of grieving period I should have had in '98 when we closed BookLab. I really felt like I lost my soul in all these transactions; I'd lost what I was good at. I had almost completely detached myself from the field. I hadn't gone to any professional meetings in a long time, so I hadn't seen anybody except the people I knew in the area. I hadn't made anything. I had been living in this sort of virtual world for three years where everything was electronic; I wasn't making anything physical. Plus I was stuck in the house all the time so I was really nuts. With my wife's blessing and approval I took off on a road trip and drove around the Southwest for about two months, camping and sight seeing. My son was at a guitar-making school in Phoenix at the time, so I drove out there. Then I wove myself back, trying to stay off the interstates. I hung out with some friends along the way. I visited Pam Smith, who was in a similar transitional stage of her career.

When I got back I still hadn't figured out what I wanted to do, but I started to look at conservation jobs around the country. In the meantime Ann had sold her business and was considering a job working for her former business partner at Texas State University here in San Marcos. I encouraged her to take the job with the idea that I'd set up like I did way back in '84 in the garage and go back to a little one person shop. I started calling around. It seemed like there was some work out there, some interest, so that is what I did.

BookLab was one of a kind wasn't it? It had cool people working there.

Yeah, there are a lot of creative people who live in Austin because it's a cool place. We employed a number of musicians and visual artists, interesting people in their own right, never mind what we were doing during the day. They just wanted a good day job, something to pay the bills, but that wasn't demeaning or that wouldn't suck the life out of them. BookLab filled that bill for many of them.



BookLab II

What is BookLab II doing?

Now I am doing limited editions and lots of box making and some of the repair type stuff for libraries that Gary Frost and I worked on in the early days of BookLab. I'm not doing treatment work, like rare book conservation. I really don't enjoy that. I did for a while, but it is tedious and slow. It requires the kind of focus that doesn't come naturally to me, and it's hard to make money at it. People don't appreciate the kind of time that goes into it. So I've pretty much turned that work away and focused on work that is more production oriented or that interests me.

So libraries will send things to you?

Yes. I have my website so people can go there and see what I offer. My love is edition binding, and I love to work with the people that make those books. That is the biggest draw for me. And I like making boxes. One would think that is the most boring of all, but the thing about boxes is that I can almost make them in my sleep. So it's easy to take a bunch of boxes and push them through and get some cash flow off of it. Hardly anyone makes them as neat or as nice as I make them, so I get satisfaction from that. There is hardly any risk at all

associated with it. I don't have to handle anything valuable, because the client sends me the measurements. It's a real nice thing to underpin the business with, a foundation to work off of.

People have made boxes for a very long time, but BookLab evolved its own style and construction methodology. BookLab made many thousands of boxes over the years, either for editions or single boxes for institutions. We learned a lot about how to make them. Our goal at BookLab was always to have something that looked and felt like a handmade object, though we weren't hung up by doing everything by hand or by

some traditional way that was passed down to us. We didn't see anything wrong with automating where we could if we never compromised the quality. So we developed a lot of production techniques that really squeezed the time down. So instead of taking 2 hours to make a box it might only take 40 minutes, or so, to make it. Getting from that two hours down to 40 minutes is that the kind of challenge I like. I enjoy working out those kinds

of systems and solving those kinds of problems. At BookLab there was always something I could focus my attention on and something I could streamline and smooth out, some assembly sequence that needed greasing or needed something done to it. That was a constant stimulation.

There is a possibility that I'm going to take a partner in the next few months. My friend Gary McLerran may move back here. The original "two guys in a garage" may be back together again. I would like sometime in the future to completely remodel our 1,000-square-foot garage — put skylights in, vault the ceiling and make it into the perfect studio. That is my ambition for BookLab II: a couple of guys working out of 1,000 square feet as opposed to the upwards of 35 people working out of 10,000 square feet like we had at BookLab. I don't have visions of the original BookLab happening again. I don't know if I have it in me anymore. Plus, I want to be making things. When you get to that size you spend most of your time managing.

What are some of your favorite parts of being a bookbinder and some of your least favorite?

8 I told you some of my favorites. I really like trying to figure out how to put things together. I like challenging projects. I like difficult books; books that other people don't want to do as editions. Challenging projects, beautiful books. I also like projects where people invite me to get involved on the design side. I don't have to have that, but it is a treat to be involved in the design. Early on I was influenced by Gabriel Rummonds, he said, "I don't want a bookbinder telling me how to design my books." That is why he had problems with a lot of bookbinders. They were really skilled American binders (when he started using state-side people), but until he met me, without fail, they were telling him, "Oh, you don't want to do that, you should do it this way." Or, "You don't want that material, you want this material." Or, "This color would look better." He didn't want them to do that. He designed his books all the way through; he designed every aspect of the book. He taught me that I was the service provider. Since then I have always couched my advice to the customer in terms of structural issues or mechanical issues. I might say, "I really love what you are doing here, however for these reasons there might be a problem. Your book may not work very well if I do what you said to do. Here's why." Early on I got focused on structural stuff, the engineering side of it, and we got a lot of weird projects that garnered recognition because other people weren't up to the challenge. The Whitney Museum's My Pretty Pony project, a Stephen King, Barbara Krueger collaboration, is a very large book, 17 lbs, with a stainless steel cover that has a clock in it. The first binder just couldn't get his head around the production of it. Our solution was elegant and it is a highly sought after book.

What about your least favorite part of bookbinding?

I've eliminated a lot of them. We talked about single-item treatment. A lot of the finicky treatment work, I just don't do that any more. I got really tired of it, even when they were wonderful, beautiful books. I have a lot of friends who do treatment work and it works for them, but I burned out early on it.

I like to enlighten clients, but I don't like to educate them on rudimentary stuff, because you have to explain why they can't get what they want for \$15 a book. Let's say a medium-size offset company is doing a limited edition for a designer. They are used to going to a place like Custom Bookbinding, a great little trade shop in Austin. About fourteen people work there, just a small little shop. But everything is priced under maybe \$15 a book. They have a couple of in-line perfect binders and an old Smyth machine, so they still do sewn

books, but they use cheap materials and labor. A potential BookLab II client may have done projects with a shop like that in the past, and then for whatever reason, they come to me. I have to try and explain to them why it is \$40 a book instead of \$10 or whatever. That is a problem, especially when clients are unwilling to disclose their price point up front.

I think it is key to do what you like to do.

If I hadn't done that book for Gabriel, I probably would still be doing rare book conservation right now, and I would probably be as into it as some of my good friends are. But I got diverted into limited edition work, and that changed my whole outlook on books.

I think back on the BookLab days. Toward the end I really got tired of dealing with employee problems, which kept me away from doing the things that I love to do. I miss a lot of those people; it was the problems of running a business that wore me down.

Which is why you are now in private practice.

The other reason is I just don't know what else to do.

Is there any particular job you have done that is one you are most proud of?

Yes. The Ellesmere Chaucer facsimile was far and away the greatest thing we ever did. I don't have a copy in the BookLab library, which is kind of sad. The super deluxe edition, as it was called, was bound in the same style that Tony Cains specified and did on the original. It is an early 15th century style binding. We did 50 books like that. I can say with some confidence that, at that time, BookLab was the only company that ever done an edition of authentic medieval bindings. There are lots of facsimile books out there that have wooden boards, but they are not completely authentic in all of their details. Ours was genuine from top to bottom, even the thread and cord. We twisted all the cable that we sewed the book on. We did everything. It took over a year to do the whole project – 50 super deluxe; 100 of what they called deluxe, which was a quarter leather with bare oak board sides, also authentic in all its details; and then there were 100 in what they called the quired edition (folded and gathered unbound sheets) that were in leather-covered boxes with rounded wood spines. That was probably the greatest thing we ever did.

Is there an ideal commission that you would like?

An ideal commission would be an edition of up to around 150 with no constraints on the budget. I'm not talking about the Chaucer thing. It doesn't have to be that elaborate, but a nicely done book, modest sized edition, where they are more

concerned about the end product than how much it is going to cost. That is the perfect thing for me. The details can be whatever, I don't care, anything. For \$70 to several hundred dollars a copy in the production costs, we can do all kinds of wonderful things. We can do wonderful things for less than that, but that is kind of pulling out the stops and going for it and doing something really nice; having boxes for it and going the whole 9 yards. It can be \$40 a book and still be really nice. But it seems when you get more into that higher price range, projects start to get interesting and exciting and we can push the envelope and do things we haven't done before. Usually, when people are willing to spend that kind of money, they let me get involved more intimately in the design of it. I am not trying to influence the color scheme or even the way it will look to the lay person, but the details underneath the hood, so they are all genuine, the real thing, and we aren't cutting corners or abbreviating things.

As an independent binder working here at your home, do you have a routine?

I spin my wheels a lot of the time. That is why I am interested in getting the partnership with Gary McLerran going. It will make me more motivated, keep me going. Multiplying by two is going to produce more than double what I am getting times one now.

Do you like working in partnership?

I first started BookLab II with Sabina Daly, who was a great partner. But in that first year or so, there wasn't enough work to support two people, so Sabina moved on. Since then I've been working alone. When I'm by myself, I'm easily distracted and I lose focus. Gary is a person I worked with for two years. I know what his work habits are like; I know him very well so I am pretty sure it is going to solve the problem. Because there will be only two people, we will be working side-by-side, but there will be a lot of tag-team work; you can really streamline things when you have two people. With one it is absolutely sequential with everything you do.

We are at that time in our life that we want to slow things down a little bit and neither one of us are so well off that we can just kick back and not do anything. We have to work, but we don't want to work like we are 30, because we're not! It seems like an ideal way to wind down. We've considered calling the partnership "two guys in a garage" but doing business as BookLab II. BookLab is such a valuable name. The name is worth a lot because of what the people who worked at BookLab and I did during the 10 years of its existence.

What are your other interests? Is there anything else you would rather be doing?

I am really into music. I play guitar. I used to play a lot when I first met my wife. I was in a folk rock band playing finger-picking type stuff. If I had been playing all these years, I'd probably be a picker by now, a blue-grasser. This is the pipe-dream side of the things – I always think it would be cool to get in a band and do open mikes and play around.

Every once in a while I dream of doing all my own stuff where everything I do is mine, including the insides of the books. That is the sort of thing I hold out for somewhere down the road. I've often thought that someday I might have my own press and print my own books. I've done a little bit of design for other people; I've printed a few books with other people. I don't know if I'm really that much of an artist because I've never really tried.

It seems like you've been able to succeed in everything you've tried.

It's a funny field, you know. If you persist and keep at it, you'll have some modest amount of success. You'll find your little niche.

That leads me to my last question. What would be your advice for someone who decides they want to be a bookbinder? Let's say they are just starting out.

They have to love it because it's hard, real hard. It's not the kind of work you get rich doing. I would dispel that idea. I'd have done a lot better monetarily if I'd just stayed in institutional work as a book conservator or preservation administrator.

What I would tell a newcomer to the field, and I've actually had the opportunity to do this a couple times, is try and find the equivalent of what I found when I started out: people who will let you come and work at the bench with them. It means you may have to be prepared to work for free for a while. I don't recommend workshops unless they are long intensive workshops. Even those I don't think are very beneficial unless you have already had a fair amount of experience. You go and you finesse your craft and your skill level and you are learning another person's methods and techniques that you can then apply or adapt for your own use. But if you are inexperienced you don't come away with much; you may think you learned something, but you often come away more confused than when you went in. There are a lot of people out there now who have hung out their shingle, doing their work as professionals, and that is all the experience they have ever had, a handful of short workshops. My advice would be

to try and find someone to take you in on an extended basis, a modern version of an apprenticeship. Other than that, I'd say, "Persist!"

That is why I am interviewing private practice binders, because there is not a lot of money in it. I want to know what keeps them in it.

I'm in it because I love the work. I love the challenge and I love the people I get to work with, both colleagues and clients. There's also a certain amount of satisfaction that comes from being recognized for the quality of my work.

For more information about Craig Jensen and to see examples of his work, go to <<http://www.bookways.com>>.

Pamela Leutz grew up in the Chicago area. There she received a B.S in Education, before moving to Dallas. After marrying into a family that was part of Gane Brothers and Lane, a bookbinding company in the USA, she became curious about the craft. In 1979, she enrolled in the popular weekly bookbinding classes at The Craft Guild of Dallas, taught by Dorothy Westapher, where she studied for many years. She later studied in Switzerland with Hugo Peller, in Dallas and the Czech Republic with Jan Sobota, and with Sally Key in Dallas.

Pamela taught bookbinding in Dallas for over 15 years, in addition to doing books and boxes for her clients. Being instrumental in introducing bookbinding to so many people and educating people about the value of the craft are achievements she values. Her bindings have been exhibited and are in collections in the USA and the Czech Republic.

She currently lives and works in Colorado Springs. Though she continues to work in higher education, teaching bookbinding and serving her bookbinding clients is her true passion. She can be reached at <Pamela.Leutz@ColoradoCollege.edu> or <<http://www.threadthatbinds.com>>.



Sharing Something Beautiful for Free: Reflections on a public arts project

By Regula Russelle



*It is difficult
to get the news from poems
yet men die miserably every day for lack
of what is found there.*

William Carlos Williams, "Asphodel, That Greeny Flower"

As artists we all want to have our work experienced and to make a difference. My colleague, CB Sherlock, and I had been working on an annual book collaboration for the past several years. Our joint work is represented in special collections, has been exhibited nationally, even internationally, and has garnered a couple of awards. But how, we asked ourselves, could we reach a wider and more diverse audience with our work — those who may not normally come to an exhibit, yet alone purchase one of our hand-made, editioned books or broadsides?

In 2008, a Jerome Foundation Book Arts Fellowship helped us to answer this question. Over the span of several months and with the assistance of two fabulous interns, we hand-printed nearly 5,000 "kinship circle" folios that contained portraits and poems on city living, improvisation, and a sense of "we." Then, during three glorious weeks in September, we dispersed these keepsakes in "takeout boxes" and by hand at several urban locations in Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota. Our aim: to share something beautiful for free.

In hindsight, hand-printing 5,000 folios was crazy in its scope. Without a grant or the privilege of a large stretch of dedicated time, this simply would not have been feasible. However, I am convinced that similar projects can be done on a much smaller scale, even without a press. More on this later. For now I want to use our project to make some

points, but keep in mind that everything we learned could easily be adapted to a smaller project. If you are a printer or a book artist you might be especially interested in this way of engaging with the public.

Before I go into detail, I want to give you a flavor of our experience out in the streets. Imagine a crisp, bright Minnesota day in mid-September. CB and I are outside the Mississippi Food Co-op in St. Paul handing out folios. It is late afternoon, between five and six o'clock. People stop at the co-op to pick up a few dinner items on their way home from work. To our surprise, most of them take a folio and read the poems on the spot. "I will share this at work," a woman tells us. A teacher plans to take a couple folios to her high school class. One man returns after picking up some groceries. "I want you to know," he says, "I was a tunnel rat in Vietnam. The poem you chose for me was right. Completely right." At the nearby bus stop where CB gives keepsakes to departing riders, the bus driver leans toward her with his hand out. He also wants one. Boarding the bus to pass one to him, she is greeted by a chorus, "We want one, too." A free poem, we learned, brightens almost anyone's day.

This kind of reception proved to be typical. We hadn't anticipated such a direct and affirming response. Why did our project work so well?



Content is key

*If you don't know what kind of person I am
and I don't know what kind of person you are
a pattern that others made may prevail in the world
and following the wrong god home we may miss our star. . .*

William Stafford, (1998. *The Way It Is: New & Selected Poems*, St. Paul, MN: Graywolf Press)

At the heart of our project is content. Text and image need to matter. They address not only an audience, but also a situation. If we are out in the streets distributing printed matter, we must be clear about its aim and value. Art-making is cultural work, as much as working with the PTA or on the Library Board, or writing a letter to a newspaper editor or a political representative. 2008 was a watershed election year with billboard and lawn sign messages everywhere. Our country was (and sadly is) in the midst of two wars, our international reputation was in shambles, and Americans felt deeply divided in their vision toward a future. In many ways, our country operated outside the family of nations. We did things alone. We did not seek the council of others, neither did we feel accountable to them. Those who felt they represented us used torture. All of this contributed to an atmosphere of distrust, unease, even despair. In September the Republican National Convention was to meet in St. Paul. Tensions were high as people worked on opposing campaigns. There was talk of riot police and violence and the concern for free speech. Much was at stake. All this was palpable last year.

Without a doubt, this general mood and tension influenced our choice of texts. The poems concern nurturing of relationships, kinship, openness, an awareness of one another — these run booklike through our selection of poems. Three of the five poems explore this theme directly. The fourth focuses on paying attention in general, and the fifth provides a bit of levity: it celebrates the pleasure of jazz, syncopation, and the brilliance of a fall day. That we would hand out these keepsakes right after the National Republican Convention was pure serendipity. We were there at the right time with the right kind of news. That is how it felt.

William Stafford's poem "A Ritual to Read to Each Other" begins with an appeal, and then ends with another:

...
*And so I appeal to a voice, to something shadowy,
a remote important region in all who talk:
though we could fool each other, we should consider —
lest the parade of our mutual life gets lost in the dark.*

*For it is important that awake people be awake,
or a breaking line may discourage them back to sleep;
the signals we give — yes or no, or maybe —
should be clear: the darkness around us is deep.*

Ilze Klavina Mueller's poem "Instructions," (2003. Gate, St. Paul, MN: Laurel Poetry Collective) conveys a similar message. She, too, appeals to our better angels when she writes: "... And you, my heart, you have a lifelong task / to be a gate. Closing. Opening. / No matter what, no matter who / demands to be let in."

However it is done, audience and message must connect. For starters, we made sure that each folio contained relatively little text. It was important to us that all the poems could be grasped on a first reading. We wanted the poems and other notes to be easily read and absorbed in a couple of minutes. As someone who has sat with my wares at sales tables many times, I know that for most people a single poem has a greater chance of being "heard" than a book full, with its wealth of offering. As with triple chocolate brownies, a little bit goes a long way. With poetry, words and phrases tend to carry multiple meanings. It is language dense with association. We knew that many of our folios would find their way into the pockets of people who do not think of themselves as poetry readers or for whom English is a second language. We were prepared. As we passed out the keepsakes, if someone indicated hesitation, or spoke with an accent, we handed them Jim Moore's poem (2006. What It's Like Here:, Minneapolis, MN: Accordion Press Collaborations) — a spare five lines long:

*In the cafe,
a woman cries and immediately
her friend reaches out, takes her hand.
I could watch forever
just how efficiently love works.*

Images, too, make a powerful statement. Their impact is faster and more direct than words. We gave the visual aspect of our project as much care as we gave the text selection. All folios, we decided, would contain portraits of community members. CB focused her portraits on relationships among people — a couple, a mother and child, a group of brothers, a cluster of friends. I portrayed individuals along a street, each looking straight from the page at the viewer.

We chose these individuals because of the way they contribute to the fabric of community. We noted their names — Zach, Sarah, Ruimin, Renda, Patrick — and we gave a bit of backstory. We mentioned that Mahmoud runs a popular coffee house that is a campus meeting place, that Norma Jean put a bench on the boulevard outside her house so that passersby can rest, that Lydia and her neighbors build community one potluck at the time. With word and image we wanted to connect with our urban audience. We meant to say: these ordinary people contribute to the making of the city, and so can you and I.

It was clear that the portraits, ten in all, made an impact. Almost everyone opened their folio immediately. Outside the Dorothy Day Center, an emergency shelter in downtown St. Paul, a man inquired if the woman pictured was Dorothy Day. It was not, but might have been, and Norma Jean's friendly

face clearly spoke to that effect. A musician at the Minneapolis Farmers' Market was intrigued by the picture of Renda and her love of music. "Same for me," he let us know after reading the poem by Meghan Mahoney-Vinz, the one that mentions Langston Hughes, Harlem, Snelling Avenue, taking pleasure in music, improvisation, autumn in St. Paul. "I've lived on Snelling," he went on, "Harlem, too. Everyplace I make music is a good place for me."



Participation – "take one, and pass one on"

We learned quickly that a personal appeal worked best. We began by placing clusters of "take out boxes" in four city neighborhood locations. They announced: "Take one, and pass one on." We dispersed about 1,000 folios in that manner. To our great delight, we knew early on that people had been reached. On our first round of restocking the boxes in the Powderhorn Park neighborhood of Minneapolis, a young man, his baseball cap on backwards, ran after us at the Fire Fly Cafe: "So it's you who is doing this!" he called. "Can I read these at Open Mic?" A young mother outside the May Day Cafe confided slyly: "I know where the boxes are!"

But overall the boxes did not empty as quickly as we had hoped, so we took to the streets. Handing the keepsakes out by hand gave us the opportunity to strike up conversations. "Would you like a free keepsake with a poem?" we asked. And then followed up with "Would you like to take a second one for a friend?" It allowed people to ask: "Why are you doing this? What are they about?" No, these weren't an advertisement for anything commercial. And no, our aim was not political or religious, at least not in a conventional sense. I think it was very important that the poems we shared mattered to us personally. We passed on something that we ourselves loved, and this must have shown.

In the end almost everyone assented. If someone mentioned poetry wasn't their thing, we gave them straightforward ones by Ilze Klavina Mueller, Jim Moore, or Megan Mahoney-Vinz. If someone declared themselves a poetry lover, they got William Stafford's "A Ritual to Read to Each Other." If a person seemed rushed or preoccupied we reached for Joyce Sutphen's "From Out of the Cave" (2001. Straight Out of View, Duluth, MN: Holy Cow! Press). Her poem reminds us that

*... you could
wake up,
you could turn
and go back
to the last thing you
remember doing
with your whole heart:*

Of course, some people walked by so fast, we could not ask. More often than not, these were people in good suits and with a briefcase, possibly in a hurry to get to work. And we did not ask anyone who wore headphones or was talking or texting. Not everyone was reached. A slowed pace and sense of openness seemed essential. We intuitively knew this and distributed the keepsakes after work hours outside the food co-op, on the weekend at farmers' markets, during lunch break at the busy commercial area of Nicollet Mall, and at bus and light rail stops – all places where people linger or wait.

The comments we heard were overwhelmingly affirming, though we did hear a particularly poignant critique. At the Dorothy Day Center a woman was angry. "I don't need poetry," she accused. "What I need is money." She is right, of course, about the money. A poem does not provide shelter, or health care, or food. To be homeless is a great personal and civic injustice. But mostly we were thanked, many times over, for something almost as simple as looking into a face and saying, "Hello."

Importantly, with this project we wanted the flow of ideas and connection to be personal and participatory, and surely this aspect of the project contributed to its success. In an experiential way, we wanted others to be part of a publication – to take two folios, one to keep, another to give to a friend. In this way some vital current is passed along. We feel more closely connected to an activity in which we are an active participant than one in which we are a passive observer or recipient. If there are two dozen tomato plants in your garden and you grew only one of them from seed, it will come as no surprise that you tend to that particular plant with extra care and attention. If we volunteer time to an organization or a cause, we are more likely to contribute in other ways as well. That is human nature.

Small is beautiful, too

Both CB and I feel that this project changed how we will approach our work in the future. For me, the impact was almost immediate. Two winters ago, in the early stages of working on “kinship circle,” I introduced a small public arts project to college students in a class I teach on hand paper making and book arts. In the class, letterpress is not an option. Everyone made small, hand-made books. Students worked on an edition of three: one to keep, the next for someone they know, the third for a stranger — to find on a park bench, inside a bus, or another public space, or to be given directly. The first year, we compiled a list of “Reasons for Art” that served as our text. In the second round, I broadened options. The content might be a salute to spring, a call to recycle or to slow down, a plea for libraries or bikes. The important thing was that the piece contains a message that matters to the person who is making it. Sharing the message begins a public dialogue. A simple project can originate from a dining room table or a classroom workbench.

Also, as I am planning my next letterpress-printed edition of books, I envision a companion keepsake in a run of a couple hundred, and then handing these out at bus stops and farmers’ markets. Now, I know exactly how this works. Such is the power of the press!

Coming back to the “kinship circle” folios, CB and I were surprised by the effectiveness and ease of our project. Handing out the keepsakes led to some of the most joyous weeks of our lives. We were amazed and moved by the openness with which we were greeted by those we had never met, and, in all likelihood, would not meet again. Something real had passed between us and others out in the streets.

I wrote this essay in the hope that you, the reader, will find something useful here that might inform your own work and doing. I wish you well as you bring art that is “news” to a widening circle of people.

Acknowledgements

I gratefully acknowledge the poets and publishers who have given us permission to publish their work in our kinship circle folios and here in this essay.

Moore, Jim (2006). *What It’s Like Here*; Minneapolis, MN: Accordion Press Collaborations.

Mueller, Ilze Klavina (2003). *Gate*, St. Paul, MN: Laurel Poetry Collective.

Stafford, William (1998). *The Way It Is: New and Selected Poems*, St. Paul, MN: Gray Wolf Press.

Sutphen, Joyce (2001). *Straight Out of View*, Duluth, MN: Holy Cow! Press.

Regula Russelle makes fine press artist’s books with CB Sherlock through Accordion Press Collaborations and independently through Cedar Fence Press. She loves teaching at Augsburg College and Minnesota Center for Book Arts. For additional information about both presses, visit <<http://www.cedarfencepress.com>>.



Follow-ed

By Tom Sowden

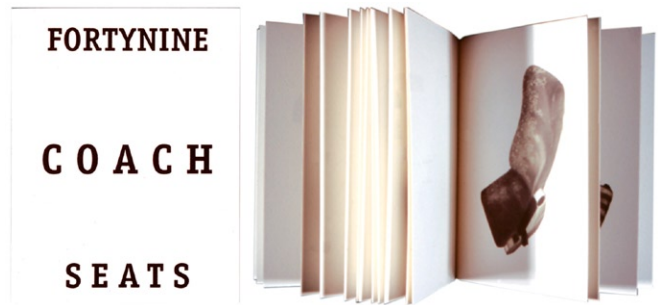
Why make books in the style of Ed Ruscha? I was going to ask some of the other people who I know also do this (and will be showing examples later), but it seemed a pointless question. Do I want to know why they do this? Do I analyse it myself? Probably not, on both counts.

For me the journey (quite literally) started five years ago when I was studying for an MA in Book Arts at Camberwell College of Arts in London. Camberwell was important for two reasons. Firstly, on the course the reference back to Ruscha was constant. The 'Father' of modern day book art was omnipresent, always cited as THE key figure, the originator, the benchmark (more by the students than the staff). If I'm honest, before this course I'd given his books little attention, but then again, I'd never seen any in the flesh. The second reason was that I was living in Bristol and studying in London. The commute to college was a good three hours, the majority of which was spent in a coach (bus) on the motorway. I was now confronting a space that until this point I had given little consideration, but now the motorway was a large part of my life and I couldn't ignore it.

The more that I took the coach the more that I realised that the other passengers would switch off as they got on board, engage themselves with another activity and ignore their surroundings. It could have been a newspaper, magazine, mobile phone, hand-held computer console or just sleep. Either way they were not observing the road, the countryside or the other passengers (unless, that is, they had a travelling companion, which was rare). I couldn't do this. Six hours a week was too much to ignore and I wanted to try and engage with my surroundings rather than switch off from them, so I started to look at how I could make books about the journey.

It was also at this point that I was introduced to the book *Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity* by the French anthropologist Marc Augé. In the book he describes exactly the kind of space that I was finding myself in, 'Non-places'. Rather than the organic space, relational, historical and concerned with identity (Augé, Marc (1995). *Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity*, London, Verso, p. 77), non-places are the built environments that condition the way in which we use them. Spaces that are only designed to be used by complicit 'passengers'. Spaces such as the air, motorway and rail routes, the mobile cabins, the airport, the railway station, the supermarket, the hotel chain, leisure parks and large retail outlets (Ibid, p. 79). Spaces for which there is a pre-defined route and we all journey through, ignoring our surroundings in a herd-like fashion.

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The combination of repeatedly travelling on the motorway, discovering Marc Augé's writings and my first real exposure to the books of Ed Ruscha meant that - in my mind at least - the only sensible option was to engage with non-place and pay homage to Ruscha by ripping him off. I started to perform small-scale interventions whilst I was travelling on the coach. I photographed all the lorry drivers that we overtook (the only other road users at the same height as coach passengers), I observed and copied other passengers on the coach, I took down all the registration plates that I observed on one day and built a picture of where all these cars had come from, I kept a tally of all the identical cars I saw in one journey, I ate cucumber sandwiches for three hours straight. Sometimes these performances became a separate book, sometimes not. But each and every time I recorded the coach I was on, the time and date, the other number of passengers (the audience), exactly where I sat and most importantly a photograph of the seat that I had occupied, my stage.

When I had all the photographs of the seats, I revisited *Twentysix Gasoline Stations*, and it was then that I knew I had to make my version, *Fortynine Coach Seats Travelling Along the M4*. Cut from their surroundings and with no explanation, the seats took on their own characters. Presented in chronological order (with gaps where the performance dictated I couldn't take a picture of the seat) there are forty nine as this was the standard number of seats on a National Express coach driving between Bristol and London at the time. Keeping as true to Ruscha's work as possible by using a similar typeface and size, this was a tongue in cheek reference that I hoped retained the humour that I found in his books. This was only meant to be a one off. But then it was very well received and I finally sold a bit of work. Could I pursue this further?

Yes.

And now I can't stop.

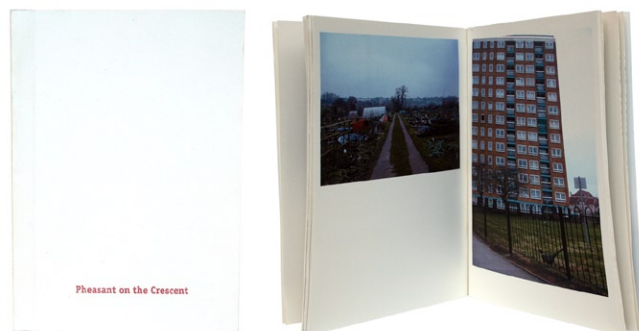




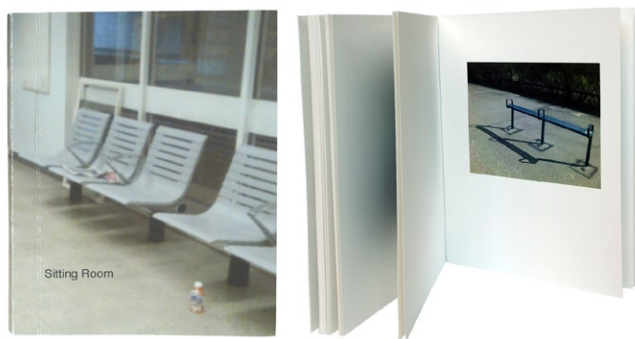
After the coach seats, I turned my attention to another non-place that dominates my life (as a father of three children), the supermarket. I became fascinated by the trolleys (carts) that we push around and contain a little slice of our personality while we trudge through the shop. As well as filming the trolley's eye view of a weekly shop I started to photograph the trolleys discarded in the supermarket car park. Again cut from their surroundings they took on their own characters, with glimpses of the drab grey car park through the slats in the wire. These photographs became *Fiftytwo Shopping Trolleys in Parking Lots* (one for every week of the year). As I had become aware of the trolleys in the supermarket, they then became more apparent when I spotted abandoned ones around Bristol. I wanted to photograph them as I found them, I'm guessing they had been left after a good drunken run through the streets. The characters that these trolleys assumed were that of the broken and damaged, at odds with the surroundings of place as opposed to non-place. These photographs became *Homeless People*, a homage to Ruscha's *Colored People*.



Over the next few years the Ruscha-esque books just kept coming. *Winter Gardens*; photographs of the trees and shrubs that are planted in retail outlet car parks just to soften the edges, with a flocked cover in the style of *Babycakes*. *Pheasant on the Crescent*, a photo diary of the world-wide trip of a plastic decoy pheasant and *Sitting Room*, another book conceived on a long commute. This time I had a part-time job in Manchester and was still living in Bristol. The commute was four hours long using at least two trains and several buses. My interest in non-place resurfaced, but I was now fascinated in the rooms, seats, benches and just funny bits of plastic that are offered to travellers to sit on as they wait for public transport. *Sitting Room* presents photographs of everything I sat on during a four-month period.



This is not to say that I exclusively rip-off Ed Ruscha, I have made attempts at being Lawrence Weiner, On Kawara and at times just myself. It's just that Ruscha's style is so recognisable and resonates with a book art audience. The fact that I'm trying to replicate an Ed Ruscha book while never succeeding is all part of the appeal to me. In all of the books it is perhaps my failure that is the main subject. I am not living in 1960s California, this is 2000s Bristol, UK. As nice a city as it is, this is not as aspirational a place as Los Angeles was; you want to avoid driving, not embrace the car. Despite all the dreams that I have for the future, these are not aspirational times. It would be impossible for my books not to fail on many levels.



Then recently my job took me to Los Angeles. As much as I had been trying to move away from Ed, I had to do something here. I was in town with Sarah Bodman and she suggested that Sunset Strip was the place to go and she could be my driver while I hung out of the window taking photographs. With failure in mind I wanted to try and produce a book that was a direct replica of a Ruscha, but just not quite right. *Some of the Buildings on the Sunset Strip* was born (*None of the Buildings on the Sunset Strip* had already been done by

Jonathan Monk). Rather than photograph all the buildings, I thought I'd just choose a few, deciding as the car was moving. In image I wanted my book to look like the original Ruscha, in practice I didn't want - or have the facilities - to go to the lengths he had for producing the photographs. As an added bonus, I also didn't know that Sunset Strip is just a section of Sunset Boulevard, I mistakenly photographed buildings on the full length of the Boulevard. A failure that hadn't been pre-planned, but was all the better for it.



Some of the Buildings on the Sunset Strip is the same height, width and length of *Every Building on the Sunset Strip*, one major difference between Ruscha's original and mine is that I have printed it in colour, a little nod to *Then and Now*. I feel this is my best yet, and perhaps now is the point to depart from Ed (although I'm making no promises). Go out on a high note. But my interest in Ed Ruscha's books will not wane, maybe one day I'll even be able to afford to buy one of my own. Until that point I have found a new way to satisfy my preoccupation, the books by the many other artists produced in a Ruscha style.

In 2006 I was contacted by Hermann Zschiegner, an architect and artist living in New York who also shares my obsession with Ed Ruscha. He had seen an image of *Fortynine Coach Seats* in the book *Creating Artists' Books* by Sarah Bodman and got in contact to say that he had also produced a book in homage to Ruscha. His book *Thirtyfour Parking Lots on Google Earth* was a facsimile version of Ruscha's of similar title, this time produced by searching Google Earth for images of the same parking lots that had been photographed by Art Alanis for Ruscha forty years previously. Printed by Blurb, it retains a mass produced aesthetic, albeit a contemporary version. He succeeded in finding all but one of the locations that Ruscha had originally used, the location for which Ruscha had not given a detailed address.



It just so happened that I was about to visit New York so arranged to meet up with Hermann and exchange books. We talked about our love of the Ruscha originals and how much of an influence they are to us, other artists and also architects. He showed me some other Ruscha-style books he had collected and we discussed the possibility of putting together an exhibition of these and similar books. I would go back to the UK and start searching for books made in homage to Ruscha in Europe and he would search for books that he could find in North America. After some consideration we came up with the title of the exhibition, *Follow-ed*.

As yet the exhibition has not come to fruition: (paid) jobs, lack of a venue and the speed with which we can collect enough books have all proved to be stumbling blocks. But the collection and quest for more continues. Some of the books are obtained because we can see a link, not knowing if the artist has been consciously trying to replicate Ed Ruscha. Most of the books are direct references to the style or subject-matter of Ruscha's originals. The one overriding factor is that they all contain an element of humour reminiscent of Ruscha.

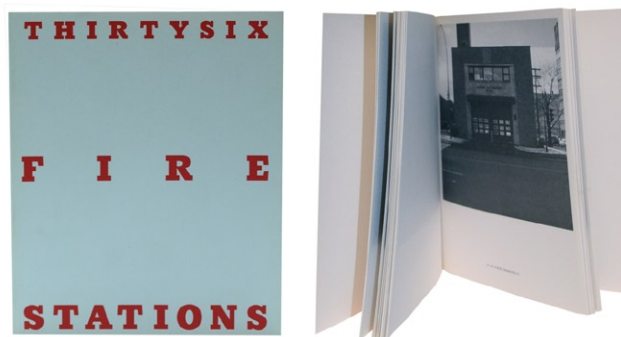
The delight in collecting these books is that we often uncover real gems. Work that has taken one of Ruscha's books and reinvented it with a contemporary twist. Work that references and parodies the time and environment that the artist finds themselves in, just as Ruscha did in the 60s and 70s. Some of my personal favourites include *Macintosh Road Test* by Corinne Carlson, Karen Henderson and Marla Hlady. An incredibly faithful reproduction of *Royal Road Test* (even down to the clothes that they are wearing for the photographs), in which they have substituted the Royal typewriter for a Macintosh Plus (Model "X") Computer. I love revisiting this book. Each time I notice something else that they have done to remain true to the Ruscha original and every time it makes me smile. I've just noticed that Corinne Carlson has her sunglasses in her breast pocket, just as Mason Williams did in the original.



Another beauty of a book that was found by Sarah Bodman for me on Ebay is *Car Wash* by the poet Tom Clark. Produced in 1970, it is (just) held together with two rusty staples and is a photocopied book of an automatic car wash, cars being washed and before-and-after shots of the dirty and clean cars. Daft it certainly is, but poignant as well. The page layout and style of photography is very reminiscent of Ruscha and I feel must be a reference to *Twentysix Gasoline Stations* and all those car journeys that he had taken. You need your gas to get there, but your car's got to look good too. It is all the more appropriate that this was done by the man who went on to write a biography of Jack Kerouac.



I think my favourite book from our collection at the moment is *Thirtysix Fire Stations* by the French artist Yann Serandour. The images in the book are a series of snapshots, taken on a single December day in 2001 of every fire station that was operational in Montreal (according to a list obtained two years before from the City of Montreal) (Gironnay, Sophie (2007). Accessed online at <<http://www.canadianarchitect.com/issues/ISarticle.asp?aid=1000215279>> 12/08/09). The book is a near perfect rendition of a Ruscha, the quality of feel, print and binding are excellent. It is also a play on the titles of Ruscha's first two books *Twentysix Gasoline Stations* and *Various Small Fires and Milk*. When I first saw it I was of course taken to Ruscha's books, but was also reminded of all those unattended fires that appear in his paintings.



These are but a few of the collection of books Hermann and I have now amassed and I still get really excited with each new discovery. I am hoping soon that we will have enough books for a dedicated show and be able to present the entire collection at venues in both the UK and the USA. We will preview a large selection of the books at the Winchester Gallery, Winchester School of Art in the UK from January to March 2011 as part of the special collections exhibition. This exhibition is being organised by Linda Newington, Head Librarian at Winchester School of Art, and will present many artists' books. As Linda said, the starting point for the exhibition is 'the work of Ed Ruscha from the 1960s cited by critics and historians as a key artist in the development of the contemporary artist's book. His approach was to make the work of artists accessible through the book form, to recognise the every day and to democratise this aspect of the visual arts. And that is exactly what I think that we artists who continue in his style are still trying to do.

Tom Sowden is the AHRC Research Fellow in Artists' Books at the Centre for Fine Print Research, University of the West of England, Bristol, UK. He hasn't yet managed to completely leave Ruscha behind and has designed the new cover of the Artist's Book Yearbook in tribute to him (available Autumn 2009). He is still keen to hear of any Ruscha-style books that you may have made or know about at <Tom.Sowden@uwe.ac.uk> or via <<http://www.tomsowden.com>>.

To view information and images of many of Ed Ruscha's artists' books, please see the online catalogue for the Joan Flash Artist's Book Collection at the School of the Arts Institute, Chicago. Keyword search – ruscha at <http://digital-libraries.saic.edu/cdm4/index_jfabc.php?CISOROOT=/jfabc>

All photographs taken by Tom Sowden of his own books and books purchased for the Follow-ed collection/exhibition.

Book — Type — Machine: From Bob Brown's Reading Machine to Electronic Simulations, 1930-2010

By Craig Saper

Books are antiquated word containers. Bob Brown, *The Readies*, (1930)

Literature by design

Rice University Digital Press has published two critical editions of books initially written and designed by Bob Brown. The new editions appear as part of a new series called "Literature by Design." The first of the Brown books, *The Readies* (published by Brown's own imprint Roving Eye Press in 1930), announces his proposal for a reading machine and the processed texts that work with the machine. He calls these texts *readies* to allude to the talkies because his machine would bring reading practices and conveyors of texts into the modern age of speed and media technologies. The new "Literature by Design" series hopes to re-publish works, mostly from the turn of the twentieth-century, that depend on the layout and design as crucial components of the literary meaning. In that sense, the series depends on a central element in the scholarship of book arts, and a trend in literary studies in general: the study of printing, book construction, and layout as crucial components of meaning making. Other editors of the books re-issued for that series include Johanna Drucker and Jerome McGann, whose scholarship often focuses on book design and arts. The two volumes of Brown's work that I am editing include my afterwords and annotations that set these works in a contemporary, as well as historical, context. One can find these works with new cover designs in multiple formats including online at Rice University Press's website. This article discusses works by Bob Brown in terms of book arts rather than, say, a study of the historical and socio-political context of his works.

One can find the interest in the literary meaning and significance of design spreading to more traditional literary studies. For example, a group of scholars have examined printers' choices in publishing poems and plays by Shakespeare [fonts, kerning, punctuation, layout, etc.] to demonstrate how those decisions impacted the substantive meaning (De Grazia & Stallybrass). Studies of modernist texts, in particular, have suggested that to fully appreciate literary texts, one must examine the layout and design (McGann, 1993). The introduction of electronic databases has made the study of the materiality of printed texts, paradoxically, easier and more widely available. One can include images of books and pages usually only available

in archives, and one can compare strategies among many books. The Bob Brown volumes, and the entire series of the new Literature by Design, will have the Creative Commons protection, like *The Bonefolder*, and, therefore, access and distribution become crucial components of these editions' meaning. Brown sought to build a machine that would do something similar in relation to the limited access of books in libraries in the first decades of the twentieth-century.

The Readies

In 1930, Bob Brown published *The Readies* manifesto with his own fine press, Roving Eye Press. He includes plans for an electric reading machine, strategies for preparing the eye for mechanized reading, instructions for preparing texts as *readies*. His discussion of reading machines seems prescient in light of text messaging with abbreviated language, electronic text readers, and even online books and journals like *The Bonefolder*. Unfortunately, he only printed 150 copies of his proposal, and less than twice that number for the later anthology. Like contemporary book artists and electronic book-machine designers, Brown had to serve as his own critic (publishing his tracts on the machine and the *readies*), publisher, and promoter. In general, one might argue that the fine press avant-garde publishers of the 1920's and early 30's resemble contemporary book artists not just in their practices, but also in the necessity to wear many hats and to use multiple genres and venues to promote and describe their works.

The expatriate modernists in Paris embraced *The Readies* project, especially those associated with the modernist magazine, *transition*, that advocated a "revolution of the word." In 1929, Harry and Caresse Crosby's Black Sun Press, in Paris, had published Brown's *1430-1930*, a book of hand-drawn visual poetry. One of those poems, "Eyes on the Half-Shell," previously appeared in Duchamp's *Blindman* and its free-hand style and visual puns impressed many avant-garde artists and writers including Nancy Cunard, who published Brown's *Words* in 1931 with her Hours Press. Later concrete and visual poets in the 1950s and 60s recognized and republished Brown's visual poems. Augusto de Campos, one of the founders of the International Concrete Poetry movement, introduced a Brazilian edition of the visual poems. Jonathan Williams published the poems with a new title, *1450-1950*, with his Jargon Press in the early 1950's.

Brown published about eight artist's books of experimental poetry as an expatriate from 1929 till 1931, five in 1931 alone, including four volumes in which the visual design played crucial roles in the meaning of the texts. Most of the volumes he published himself with Roving Eye Press, and after returning to the US he continued to publish avant-garde





works, advocated Surrealist writing, and published many volumes in popular genres throughout the 1930's. During those years, he simultaneously published tracts advocating communes and pro-laborer positions, wrote Hollywood B-movie story-treatments and co-authored numerous cookbooks.

It was within that context that Brown proposed the reading machine or book-machine. The dedication of *The Readies*, to "all eye-writers" and "readers who want an eyeful," alludes to his recurring motifs of the "celerity of the eye" (versus the "clumsy hand" turning pages) especially in visual poetry. He argues that "reading will have to be done by machine; microscopic type on a movable tape running beneath a slot equipped with a magnifying glass and brought up to life size before the reader's birdlike eye, saving white space, making words more moving." To accomplish this goal of making more text available to readers, he proposes to build a machine. Significantly for my discussion here, Brown saw the machine as a substitute for the book as a distribution mechanism. The machine, or the prototype, was the size of a typewriter, run by electricity, and unrolled "one moving line of type before the eye, not blurred by the presence of lines above and below" (29). He planned to print the type "microscopically by the new photographic process on a transparent tough tissue roll . . . no bigger than a typewriter ribbon," and this roll, "no bigger than a typewriter ribbon" (28) would unroll "beneath a narrow strip of strong magnifying glass" (28). It resembled a microfilm reader, for which he started to apply for a patent, and it was specifically to "rid" the reader "at last of the cumbersome book, the inconvenience of holding its bulk, turning its pages, keeping them clean" (29).

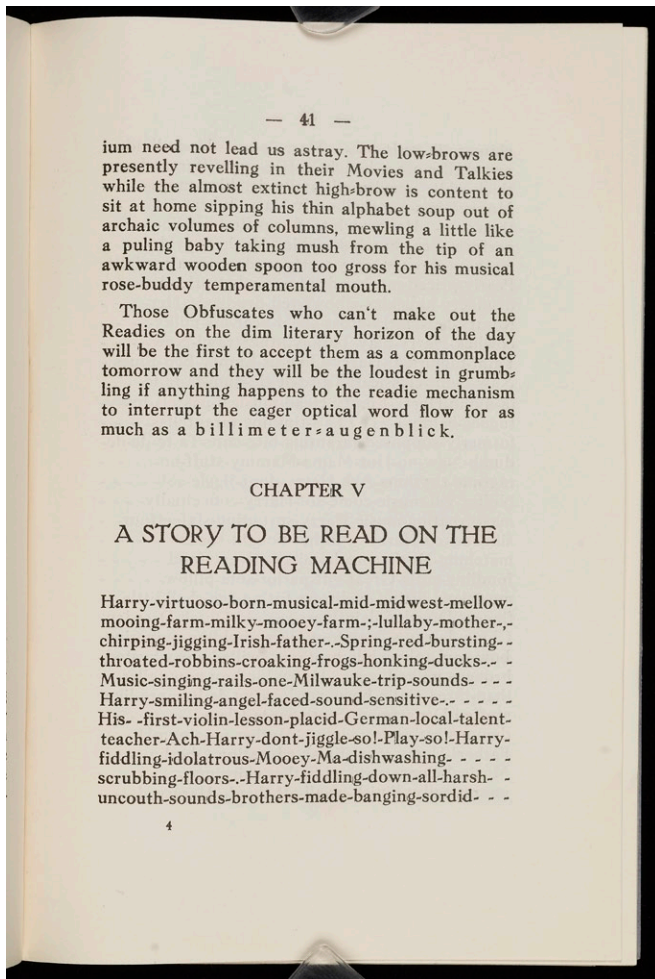
Eventually, one could "radio" readies "as it is today to [produce] newsies on shipboard and words perhaps eventually will be recorded directly on the palpitating ether" (40). In this sense, Brown's work creates a lineage for the shorthand languages emerging around new media technologies and languages that resemble the radio-reading-machine's readies (i.e., instant messages, emoticons, etc). The material conditions of type were also something he knew well for he owned presses including "a monotype" from which he "watched molten letters pour through it into an endless stream of words" (Brown, *Readies for BB's Machine* 160). Photographic composition and the use of new machines like the "August-Hunter Camera Composing Machine," (180) would allow for "a multitude of words" to be "printed in a minimum of space and yet readable to the naked eye" (180).

The fascination with machines, as alternatives to codex and other traditional forms of representation, was not new to the avant-garde poets and artists of that era. In the early 1920s, the Dadaist Tristan Tzara wanted to know if he "could

transcribe at top speed everything that fell, rolled, opened, flew, and continued" within his head (Tzara as quoted in Caws 17 n. 17). George Antheil, a friend of Brown's, made a wind machine used in his composition *Mechanism* (1923). Antheil, self-proclaimed "Futurist-terrible," provoked the audience to riot during the machine concerts, and he also composed the music for Fernand Léger's *Ballet Mécanique* (1924), a film that celebrated the mechanical comedy and stunts rather than the naturalized dance found in traditional ballet. To appreciate Brown's reading machine, one needed to attend the performance of the machine, but since only a prototype was ever constructed, I needed to produce a simulation of the experience of reading with Bob Brown's machine.

In the context of avant-garde art and writing, he notices that "only the reading half of Literature lags behind, stays old-fashioned . . . cumbersome . . . bottled up . . ." Brown insists he is not inventing a new style of writing, and simply wants to prepare for the modernization of reading "at the speed of the day," the context of his own tastes and writings make it easy for even the best critics, and sometimes Brown himself, to think of the project only in terms of the modernist revolution of the word and a "stab in the dark at writing modernly." Instead, the Readies function as a printed analogy for what reading will feel and look like "spinning past the eye out of a word-machine." One uses this book-type-machine by "extracting the dainty reading roll from its pill box container the reader slips it smoothly into its slot in the machine, sets the speed regulator, turns on the electric current and the whole 100,000, 200,000, 300,000 or million words spill out before his eyes . . . in one continuous line of type." The readies, the name he gives to the processed texts, resemble a cross between microfilm and a ticker-tape abbreviated text.

Brown confesses that using the abbreviated texts with dashes between words is a "crude" attempt to simulate motion. Further the printed version cannot simulate the machine's ability to move the text backward or forward at various speeds, nor can the printed version magnify the text to "any size." Magnifying glass, spools of one line of type, electric current, controls and regulators seem both quaint and futuristic, but the printed readies do not engage the construction of the book as an issue; the printed readies simply create an analogy of how the reader might experience the book-machine.



A page of a readie prepared for the reading machine.

Sim-read online

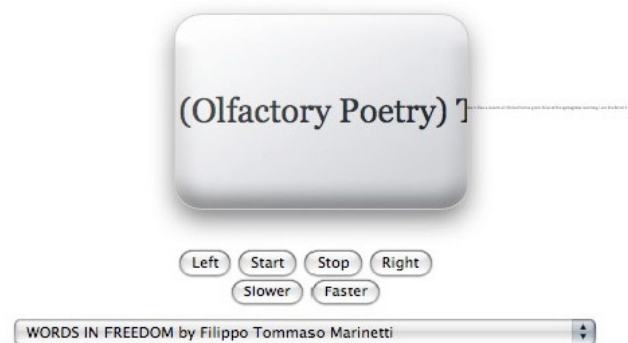
To supplement my editorial work on the Brown editions, and my larger project of writing a biography of Brown and his machine, I built a simulation of the reading machine. The texts running through the machines on my website, aptly named readies.org, include most of the readies produced for Brown's machine by modernist poets and writers.

To avoid the problems mentioned above with using em-dashes as an analogy for movement, the machine at readies.org uses an electronic simulation that includes movement at variable user-controlled rates, backward and forward text, a simulation of magnification (although not yet a variable magnification), and other aspects of Brown's plan for the machine impossible to reproduce in a book-simulation.

Again, Brown's explicit goal, and mine in the simulation at readies.org, is not to offer a new literary style, but rather run an experiment that creates literature in the style of "abbreviated dispatches sent by foreign newspaper correspondents to cut down cable expenses" as if one applied the technologies of the day to reading all texts, literary and

practical. His reading machine sought to "unroll a televisual readie film" in which punctuation marks become visual analogies. For movement we see em-dashes (—) that also, by definition, indicate that the sentence was interrupted or cut short. These create a "cinemovietone" shorthand system. The old uses of punctuation, like periods to mark the end of a sentence, disappear. Reading becomes more in tune with watching a continuous series of flickering frames become a movie. In my reading machine simulation this cinematic effect is particularly pronounced. When one moves the text forward or backward at fast speeds, the text becomes a kind of flickering line. Of particular interest, when one moves the text at these high rates of speed eventually one cannot tell the direction the text moves; it seems to flicker without moving in any direction.

The Reading Machine



A screen grab of Readies.org

Duchamp, a formative influence on Brown's experimental and visual poetry, designed, built, and found readymade machines that illuminated an alternative epistemology. One could argue that the genesis of Brown's machine certainly includes Duchamp's machines and poetics. Artists like Raymond Roussel built their own Surrealist reading machines relatively soon after the Readies appeared. It seems fitting that Brown would call the processed texts the Readies, explicitly alluding to talkies and movies, and implicitly (and unintentionally), to readymades. Brown hoped to do for reading what Pablo Picasso did for painting, or what James Joyce, Gertrude Stein, and e. e. Cummings did for writing.

A year after publishing his manifesto, Brown published an anthology of texts especially prepared for the machine. The later anthology included 40 of his friends and fellow avant-gardists, with works by Gertrude Stein, Kay Boyle, and F. W. Marinetti. The anthology also included Imagist poets, like William Carlos Williams, who he had worked with in the Grantwood Village art colony in 1916-17, and a sane Ezra Pound, who corresponded with Brown and the writers associated with *Others: A Magazine of New Verse* in those



earlier years. That volume's contributions, of uneven quality, have a giddy clubhouse feel and lack the coherent focus and serious intent of Brown's manifesto. Without any explicit editorial interference with the contributors, and Brown only contributing an appendix (a condensed selection from *The Readies* manifesto), some texts seem more explicitly for the machine, and others, like Marinetti's seem to ignore or loosely interpret Brown's constraints.

Some of the contributors, especially those *not* associated with modernist poetry, wallow in adolescent humor (as if baiting a fantasized censor with sexually explicit and racist language); in fact, one was literally adolescent in perspective, written by Bob's teenage son describing his unpleasant first sexual encounter a year or two before. My online publication of the *Readies* anthology (that has the readies run through the simulation of the machine in action) allows readers to experience the readies as Brown intended, and it also allows readers to make their own judgments about individual readies, and the anthology project as a whole. Since, Brown's Roving Eye Press edition of the anthology consisted only of around 300 copies (and even that many was difficult for him to sell at the time), and no one until now has published the anthology, my simulation allowed the actual texts to enter into the increasingly lively debate about the machine and readies by scholars of literary modernism and experimental poets.

We usually associate electronic simulations with physical activities like driving, flying, or guitar playing. We also associate simulations with social systems, urban planning, or athletic activity, and products like Wii and Sims suggest a visceral interaction with databases of information.

This electronic project, began as a mere supplement for my publications, including the critical editions of Brown's book on his reading machine. Work on the project led first to a way to think about databases, interfaces, and mechanized procedures as alternatives to the dominant processing technologies and procedures, and later to a realization that one could simulate reading situations and experiences usually only described in print publications. So, the Brown machine simulation becomes a prototype for a series of simulations on other reading situations both in the past and potential futures: simulating reading rare or limited editions of artists' books and other experimental works.

The initial goal and intention was simply to make accessible and available the works published as readies; the works were composed by the most important literary and artistic figures of the avant-garde in the late 1920s and early 1930s. So, the project was simply a database of the collection.

When our production team began, we thought the project would take one week to implement one example of a reading machine; instead it took 52 weeks, a dozen iterations of the machine-simulations, and hundreds of hours preparing the readies for the machines the production team was able to produce.

Michael North, one of the leading authorities on modernist literature and Bob Brown's work, suggested, in terms of my simulation project, that the computer was the machine; so, we did not need to draw a picture of a machine in the machine. The machine should scroll the text. Finally, unlike Simon Morris, the British book artist, whose works often focus on reading, who I had consulted with about the machine a few years ago, North thought I should model my machine closely on Brown's readies and machine. Morris thought the machine we built should look to Brown for inspiration, but not modeled closely on the readies. N. Katherine Hayles, a leading scholar of electronic literature, asked me if Bob Brown did actually build the reading machine or just imagine it? My answer was that the evidence of the works he produced for a reading machine and his patent proposals for the machine make the answer ambiguous. Was it analogous to a ticker-tape machine or a microfilm machine? There is evidence for both, and perhaps some combination of the two types of reading machines. It also makes building an actual machine a challenge — perhaps an impossible challenge — a challenge of making a representation, an analogy, a metaphor for a provocation meant to unsettle our facile received ideas about reading and about how a book works as a technology that exceeds the codex.

A model of book design & word spacing

Placing Brown's machine and my simulation in the context of book production begins with a historical discussion of word spacing since the readies use dashes, eliminate "white space" between words, dispense with many less meaningful words like prepositions, conjunctions, and many two letter words like "it." With the invention of the printing press, a process already operating in bookbinding of illuminated hand-scribed manuscripts intensified. One of the most important aspects of printing was word separation, and Brown seeks to undo that aspect of printing with one continuous stream of word--after--word--one--continuous--line-type.

Paul Saenger, in *Space Between Words*, defends "the thesis that the separation of words, which began in the early Middle Ages, altered the physiological process of reading and by the fourteenth century enabled the common practice of silent reading as we know it today" (ix). Without word separation or punctuation (*scriptura continua*), reading requires enormous effort and one had to read aloud so that one could hear and

unconsciously choose/invent the delineation and punctuation among a long continuous string of words. Saenger explains that “the reintroduction of word separation by Irish and Anglo-Saxon scribes marks a dramatic change in that relationship and constitutes the great divide in the history of reading between antique cultures and those of the modern Occident” (12). Brown’s proposal for a reading machine and readies may also move reading from verbal translation to optical flow in part because of the lack of punctuation and the elimination of common types of words like conjunctions, prepositions, and more.

Saenger explains that “During the course of the nine centuries following Rome’s fall, the task of separating written text, Which had been for half a millennium a cognitive function of the reader, became instead the task of the scribe” (13). In this discussion, he also teases out the implications of silent reading. “The importance of word separation by space is unquestionable, for it freed the intellectual faculties of the reader, permitting all texts to be read silently, that is, with eyes alone. As a consequence, even readers of modest intellectual capacity could read more swiftly, and they could understand an increasing number of inherently more difficult texts” (13). Other innovations, like attention to word order, discrete clauses and emblematic punctuation, aided the process of understanding more effectively and more rapidly. “Whereas the ancient reader had relied on aural memory to retain an ambiguous series of sounds as a preliminary stage to extracting meaning, the scholastic reader swiftly converted signs to words and their order might quickly be forgotten. Memory in reading was primarily employed to retain a general sense of the clause, the sentence, and the paragraph” (254). If the machine and readies add literal motion, eliminate punctuation and helping words, then the reading process changes. Tactility and optical innovations also impact memory.

Machine as/of Book Arts

Paradoxically, Brown’s machine, like the more ubiquitous typewriter, intended to standardize and clarify meaning produced a situation in which a conglomeration of machine, operator, paper, could produce readies or typings [typewriter poems]. The readies still have individual words, but the process allows for a return to the pre-type era of undifferentiated words. Words now combined into a-linguistic images. Similar to the reading machine, the typewriter’s peculiar abilities to produce art usually appears in footnotes to larger art movements or schools like constructivism, concrete poetry, op art, or Bauhaus modernism. Here it marks an analogous *leakage* of traditional composition and book-reading into a tactile-mechanic visceral semantic system.

We increasingly become aware of the para-alphabetic apparatus of the book type machine; hyperlinked bindings will eventually remind readers of the hand-held-machine-eye-tracking-sewing-with-cords-and-wireless.

In this shift away from what literary scholars call logocentric writing, actual words might appear in these typewriter poems, but they no longer have priority over other visual imagery. Some of the poems are figurative; many seek to explore possible effects of the machine not noticed outside these artistic and poetic uses. With a minimum of words, and an absence of syntax, readies attempt a more direct visual and visceral connection to the reader rather than the traditional hearing of the author’s voice through reading through a narrow notion of literature.

William Everson’s argument about the typewriter, could easily describe readies. He writes that, while the typewriter empowered the poet to be his own typesetter, it has also led to an over-emphasis on the eye. “Everything goes the way of the eye and the contact with the ear is lost. But, poetry begins with the ear, the tongue and the ear. The eye is for the printer” (52). One of the ongoing debates about typewriter poetry and visual poetry in general concerns whether the marks on the page should serve the voice, or serve to represent what a voice speaks. Is writing a slave to speech? Are there poetic and aesthetic effects that have no translation in speech? The readies are a poetry not intended to represent an author’s voice, but to directly imprint a process and a visual aesthetic that has no equivalent in speech. It demands a tactical visceral literacy or a mechanic theory of reading.

The book, with its bound-signatures, was the machine of an earlier modernity and standardization. It was a key mechanism and fitting metaphor for the rise of the public sphere and allowed for the rise of Universities. It made the patron-reader the author(ity) of the book’s meaning and distribution. Brown’s plans for a machine-conveyor of texts resembles an sculptural artist book, and fits neatly with a Conceptual art lineage in book arts, and the resulting blur of words and dashes seems to replace an aural-oral literacy with an optical-tactical e-literacy. A modernist fine press printer, Bob Brown, may have hinted at how motorized-kinetic sculptural artists’ books will prepare our sensorium for the changes to reading already happening around us. Eventually, we will awake to a different notion of printing, book-machine, and reading, but never to realize that the change began in the first third of the twentieth century.



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Craig Saper, Professor of Texts and Technology at Central Florida, writes about visual poetry, book arts, and media technology in his book *_Networked Art_* (2001), and in chapters in *Image Process Literature* (Designers Elisabeth Tonnard with Chris Burnett, 2010) and in *The Exquisite Corpse* (University of Nebraska Press 2009, forthcoming). His book arts works include *On Being Read* (Diane Fine's Moon(kosh) Press, 1985) and *Raw Material* (Lynn Tomlinson's SKS Press, 2008). Visit his readies.org [using Firefox], <<http://readies.org/typebound>> (a catalogue for an exhibit he co-curated on book arts and typewriter poetry), and <<http://readies.org/saper>>. He has just edited, with afterwords and annotations, new editions of Bob Brown's *The Readies* and *Words* both with Rice University Press available at <<http://rup.rice.edu/readies.html>>.



Successfully Creating a Single-section-Pamphlet German Case Binding

By Barbara Tetenbaum

*This article originally appeared in Hedi Kyle
Festschrift 2009 published by Rutherford Witthus.*

Introduction:

My relationship to bookbinding stems from the limited edition artist books that I have made for nearly 30 years, for which I produce the binding as well as the printing. When I began printing books in 1979 under the tutelage of Walter Hamady, the only binding the students were taught was the single pamphlet stitched into a soft paper wrapper. The students were quite creative in figuring out interesting ways to choose and fold paper, and make elaborate books from this single stitch. And we were fairly content with this small sliver of knowledge as the pamphlet was just the right amount of pages for the small chapbooks and artist books that most of us were making.



Gymnopaedia Nr. 4

Years later I began to learn more traditional bookbinding such as multiple section case binding. Although it was lovely to learn these techniques, I never found that my own work needed this kind of binding, simply because my projects were only one or two sections, a physical “profile” which is difficult to case in to a traditional flat-back case binding. I made my own “hardcover pamphlet” solution by simply adhering covered boards to the end pages of the pamphlet, but these books never had the presence on the shelf that a true case bindings offered with its spine and titled label.

After learning the method for the German Case Binding (sometimes called the Bradel binding or Gebrochete Rücken)

I realized that it was time to figure out a way to use this with a single pamphlet. The key challenge was to figure out how to center the v-shaped profile of the pamphlet’s spine on the wider flat strip of the case’s spine, and keep this centered as the hinge material was adhered and boned down to the spine area (this is different from a normal multi-section book which only requires the shoulder of the book to be adhered when casing-in). The problem was that each attempt to bone down the hinge resulted in the pamphlet shifting off-center. I could probably achieve this with time and patience, but casing-in 30 - 100 copies of a delicately-printed text block would have been stressful and probably resulted in less-than-perfect books.

General technical comments:

My aesthetics are based in the Age of Production; my sensibilities are very-much post-Gutenberg. Therefore I don’t try to make invisible the evidence of production, such as the cloth turn-ins on the inside of the book’s cover. I compare this to clothing we wear: we like that the seams define their various parts, and care only that they are even and of good proportion. Therefore these directions do not include certain competition-style steps that you may wish to add.

There is a bit of ‘play’ in the final binding due to the text block’s profile being v-shaped.

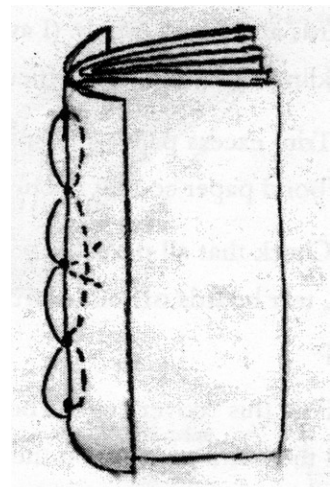
All materials should have the grain running parallel to the book’s spine. Materials used for cover and inside paste-down should have a similar “pull” to avoid warping.

I use a mixture of three parts PVA to one part methyl cellulose for all parts of the book. Straight PVA or wheat paste will also work.

Step-by-step instructions

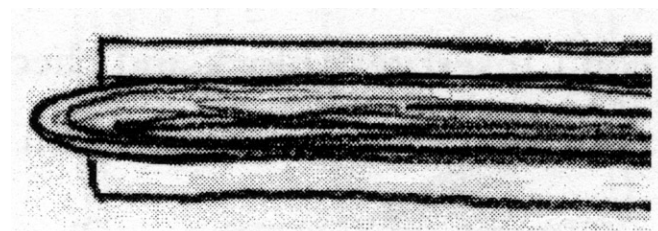
The directions that follow contain the simple solution that I found to resolve this casing-in problem.

Sew pamphlet with additional book cloth hinge (hinge = aprox. 7 cm wide before folding). Good side of cloth faces into the text block. I recommend sewing so the tail ends are on the inside of the section. Normally I would leave the gutter ‘clean’ of the knot, but the tail ends might interfere with casing in.



Cut 2 pieces of thin #25 (.06) binders board measuring height of text block plus 2-3mm and same width of text block minus 2mm (OR wait and mark the fore edge by eye and trim just before covering.)

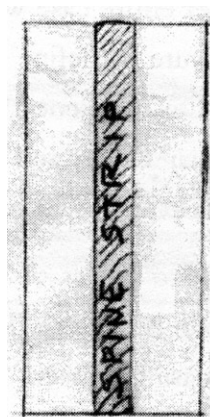
Measure spine piece by placing both boards on sewn book and measuring total thickness. Cut a strip of 2-ply museum board or similarly thick material to this width and a bit longer than the height of boards.



Measuring spine thickness

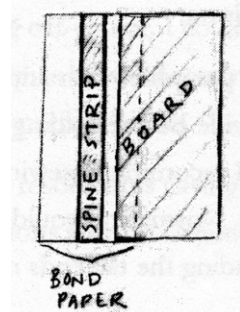
Cut an 8 cm wide strip of bond paper that is also taller than the boards. Glue spine strip to the center of this strip. I use a steel ruler to make sure this piece glues straight.

Cut a strip of mat board or use a piece of brass stock 6mm wide by height of boards. This will be your tool to space the boards the correct distance from the spine strip (This spacer can be 5mm – 7mm depending on the materials and size of the book).



Spine strip

Glue a 3cm wide stripe of PVA from the spine edge of the binders board and adhere each board parallel to the 6mm spine strip using the spacer to position them equally from the spine. Use a straight edge along the bottom of spine strip to make sure both boards are placed evenly (Gluing the paper strip makes it more difficult to place the boards precisely).

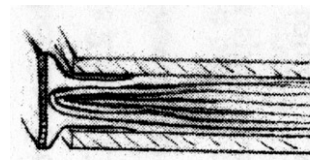


Board placement

Trim excess paper and spine material to height of boards. Trim the bond paper so that about 2cm remains on each of the boards.

Check that all parts are equal and parallel before proceeding. If not, tear boards off and start again with new bond paper and spine strip.

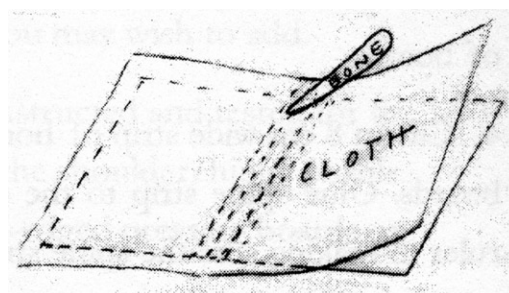
Fold this “cover” so the boards and spine strip are on the outside and the bond paper is on the inside. This is the correct position of the cover and should not be confused when covering with cloth (It would be helpful to make a pencil note on the boards to remind you.). Insert text block and check if the squares are how you want them. If needed, mark and trim both boards.



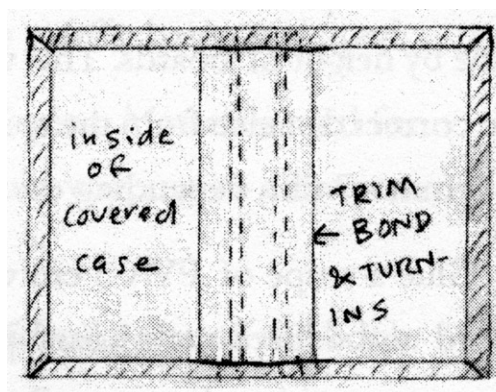
Spine view

Alternatively, mark and create small recess for cover label if you require this.

Cover entire case with cloth, paper or combination of the two, making sure to define all edges of the spine area with your bone folder (Do this action ONLY on the outside of the cover). Make usual corner cuts and glue up turn-ins, being careful to smooth materials evenly over spine area.



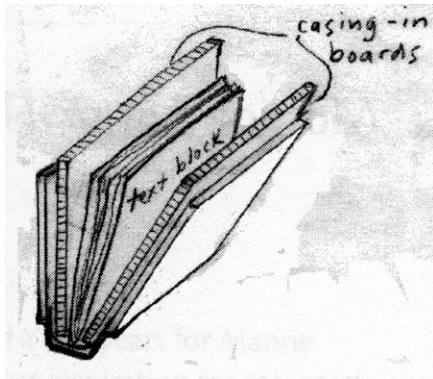
Define board and spine stiffener edges with bonefolder



View of inside of case after covering

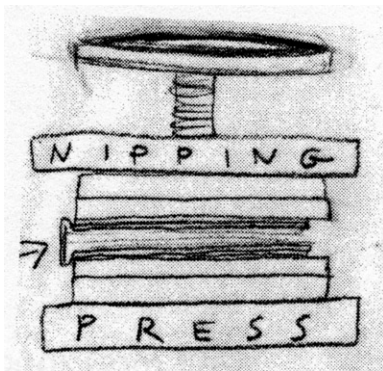
Cut two pieces of binders board same height and approx. 2cm wider than text block. These will be the tools to center the text block as you case-in. Insert “centering boards” between text block and book cloth hinges. Insert into cover to see how the text block will fit equally at spine and within

head/tail of case. Rub these boards in the case's spine to create creases on the hinge material. You will eventually be gluing the book so that these hinges glue all the way onto the spine strip, so take the time to check that everything is ready to go.



Casing in

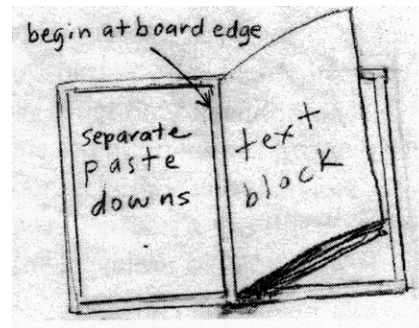
I like to glue one hinge first, but leave both centering boards in as I case-in the book. Make sure to have strips of waste paper and wax paper to protect your text block in this process. Glue one hinge, pick up unit and press extra boards in tight to the spine, using them as both centering devices and as rubbing-down tools. Turn book over and do the second side making sure that entire spine of pamphlet is glued, leaving in the centering boards as you case-in the second hinge.



Nipping press

Remove centering boards, replace waste paper with wax paper and clean sheet of blotter or newsprint and press for a few minutes in nipping press. Make sure to leave spine free as you press.

Measure and cut two pieces of paper or cloth for the inside covers. Make sure that material is measured and placed so that it does not extend into unsupported hinge area. Glue each down and press overnight (ideally) with blotter or wax paper, making sure that spine is free of pressure.



Putting down the pastedown

Barbara Tetenbaum has been printing limited edition artist books since 1979 under the imprint "Triangular Press". She is currently Professor and Department Chair of Book Arts at the Oregon College of Art & Craft. She just returned from a year-long sabbatical studying, researching and teaching in Leipzig and Halle, Germany and in Cortona, Italy. She can be reached at <btetenbaum@yahoo.com>.

Surface Gilding

By James Reid-Cunningham



Figure 1. The House South of North. Calfskin, gold leaf, palladium leaf, kidskin, fish skin, goatskin, box calf, abalone. Bound 2006.

Traditional binding decoration utilizes gold leaf to create discrete highlights, as in gold finishing. What I refer to as “surface gilding” covers a binding with gold leaf over large areas, even over entire boards. This kind of decoration is rare in bookbinding history, but can be seen in Art Deco bindings done in France during the 1920s and 1930s. Surface gilding has become increasingly common among design binders in recent years. Whether bound in leather, paper or vellum, surface gilding gives a spectacularly luxurious effect to a binding, creating a book that glows.

In 2005 the Boston Athenaeum, where I am chief conservator, awarded me a professional development grant to research methods of gilding entire bindings. I was given a month of paid leave to seek out examples of surface gilding, and to develop techniques for re-creating this type of decoration. I visited English institutions including the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Wormsley Library, and the British Library, then spent several weeks in my bindery at home testing a varieties of adhesives and techniques used over the centuries to attach gold to books. Having found several methods that succeeded, I taught a series of workshops in surface gilding for the San Francisco Center for the Book, the Guild of Book Workers, and the Garage Annex School for Book Arts, Easthampton, MA.

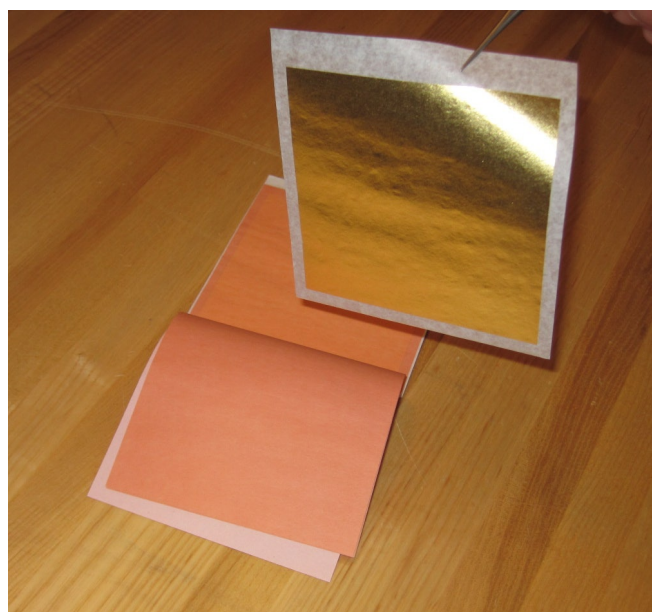


Figure 2. Transfer leaf.

Gilding on large flat surfaces is best done with transfer leaf (also called patent leaf), which is gold leaf mounted on a piece of thin tissue that allows easily handling without wrinkling or breaking the gold leaf. Transfer leaf can be cut with a scissors. Use a scissors reserved only for this task because any scratch or little bit of adhesive on the blade will pull the leaf and break it. When using loose gold leaf, it is necessary to adhere the leaf to the substrate using oil or Vaseline.

It sometimes seems that any adhesive ever invented has been used at one point or another to adhere gold to a book, so there are many choices of what to use. Egg white, dextrin (potato starch), gelatin and fish glue have all been used for gilding leather, but I have had greater success using shellac glaires. (Many finishers use the term “glair” to refer only to egg white, but I use the term in the more modern interpretation: any adhesive used to adhere gold.) I use Miniatur for paper and vellum, and Jade 403 PVA for gilding papyrus and paper.

Use a flexible brush to apply Miniatur and PVA, and a gilder’s size brush made from squirrel hair for shellac glair. I have had no luck using the small paint rollers that are now used by many binders for applying glue; where the adhesive overlaps, the gold appears uneven. Silicone release paper or waxed paper is used as a barrier during gilding. Some silicone papers are opaque; the semi-transparent ones are much more useful. Being able to see what is happening to the gold is a great benefit. Heat is applied using a tacking iron. Having taught gilding in many venues, it is apparent that the thermostat on each tacking iron reads differently. Although I give estimated temperatures, experimentation will determine what temperature your tacking iron will require in order to

adhere gold leaf. Tests of surface coatings such as Klucel G in ethanol, Renaissance Wax, SC6000, and Krylon suggest that they are unnecessary, and solvents in the coatings can sometimes dislodge the gold by reactivating the adhesive. If the gilding is done correctly, no coating is necessary.

The illustrations that follow show the gilding of loose sheets, or plaquettes of leather, but with the exception of flyleaves and doublures, I always gild directly on the bound book.

1. Gilding Leather with Fixor

The central challenge in gilding large areas of a leather binding is making a thin coating of gold adhere without either the gold abrading off, or having the process cause changes in the physical nature of the skin, resulting in a loss of the sensual qualities of the leather. Overlapping leaves of gold can result either in areas of thicker gold, which are brighter, or in sharp lines demarcating the edge of the leaf. Subtle blending of overlapping leaves of gold is the most difficult aspect of surface gilding.

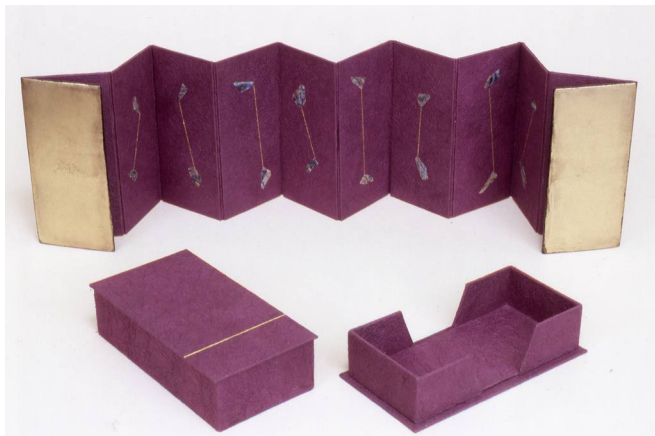


Figure 3. Zakka. *Calfskin, kyosei-shi, abalone, gold leaf*. 2001.

All of the adhesives that bookbinders generally referred to as “shellac glaire” are proprietary formulas, so getting an accurate idea of their contents is difficult. They are all very different in their properties, and so one would assume they can’t all have shellac as a base. BS glaire is made using pale French shellac, either liquid or as a flake dissolved in alcohol, mixed with industrial strength ammonia. BS glaire never really dries. JHS glaire from Hewits uses the same formula as BS glaire, but with borax replacing the ammonia. I have had no luck surface gilding with JHS glaire, but I’m sure that is my shortcoming and not Hewits’. My favorite glaire for surface gilding of leather is Aurofix; it was once available from BookMakers, but is now unavailable in the US as far as I can tell. It is made in Switzerland, and looks and behaves like shellac. All three can be used straight from the jar.

I currently use Fixor for surface gilding of leather. Fixor is often referred to as a shellac glaire, but Betsy Palmer Eldridge informs me that unpublished tests at the Canadian Conservation Institute revealed that it is not shellac. Although the formula is still something of a mystery, Betsy speculates that it may be animal glue in a solvent (Eldridge, Betsy Palmer. August 1, 2009. Email to the author.). Fixor must be thinned with distilled water before use. I prefer a formula of two parts of Fixor to one part of water. This is thicker than that commonly used for gold tooling. Allow the Fixor to dry for at least two hours before gilding. There is a tendency for Fixor to pool up, i.e., it pulls together and puddles in places, resulting in an uneven gilding. Careful application of Fixor is essential to even gilding.

Traditional gilding with egg white might be referred to as a “wet process,” in that the leather is damp during gilding. Using shellac glaire is a dry process, with no wetting out of the leather, although high humidity in the environment almost always makes gilding more successful. Having experimented with using multiple coats of glaire before gilding, it appears that a single thin but even coat gives the best results. Multiple coats ensure overall coverage with no blank spots, but all of the glaires tend to sit on the surface of the leather, so multiple coats result in a thicker layer between the gold and the leather. When applying glaire, avoid allowing bubbles to form on the surface, as they will burst and dry leaving craters that disfigure the finished product. Use raking light to watch that the glaire isn’t going on unevenly, or with overlapping areas more thickly glaired, or with brushstrokes showing, all of which result in streaking and an uneven finish to the gold. All of the shellac glaires can be gilt a long time after application, but I generally gild soon after glairing, so I do not know how long they remain open after application.

Leather can also be gilt using Jade 403 PVA or Miniatur, as described below for gilding paper and papyrus, but they both tend to fill in the grain of leather, and even on smooth leathers such as calf, they give an unpleasant feel to the final product.

Each glaire gives a slightly different finish given its working properties, so the choice of which glaire to use is made based on what result is desired. PVA seems spongy and visually flat; Miniatur gives a lighter sheen to the gold; BS Glair sits on the surface and has a tackier feel; and Aurofix is easy to apply and sinks into the skin, leaving only a thin coating. Given that the goal is to gild the leather without losing the pleasurable feel of the leather, I primarily utilize Fixor. The process is the same for any of the shellac glaires or PVA; Miniatur can be applied to leather using the process described for gilding paper in Figures 12-16 that follow.



Figure 4. Place the transfer leaf down on the glaired area and cover with a sheet of silicone release paper. Use a tacking iron at 250 degrees for a few moments to gently set the gold onto the surface of the leather. Be careful not to dig in to the surface of the leather, leaving dents that will be far more obvious when covered with gold. Do not heat the edge where the next leaf will overlap with the first leaf; a small amount of gold along the edge will be removed later (Figure 6, below) to blend the joints between leaves of gold. This first application of heat just tacks the gold in place; successive applications of the tacking iron will be used to permanently adhere the gold.

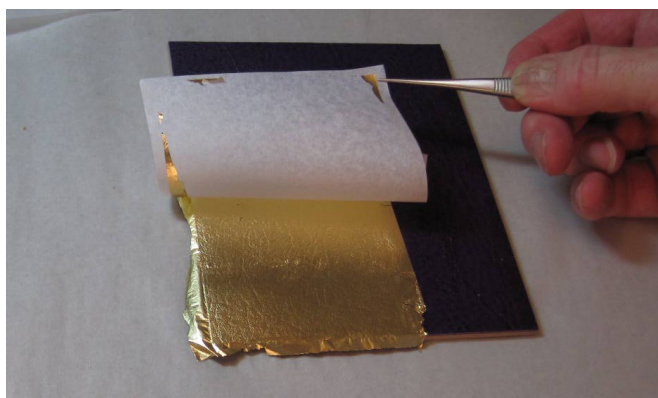


Figure 5. Gently peel back the silicone release paper and the tissue, discard the tissue and recover the gold with the silicone release paper. Reheat using the tacking iron for ten seconds, working over the surface of the gold without dislodging it, and without attaching the edges of the leaf.

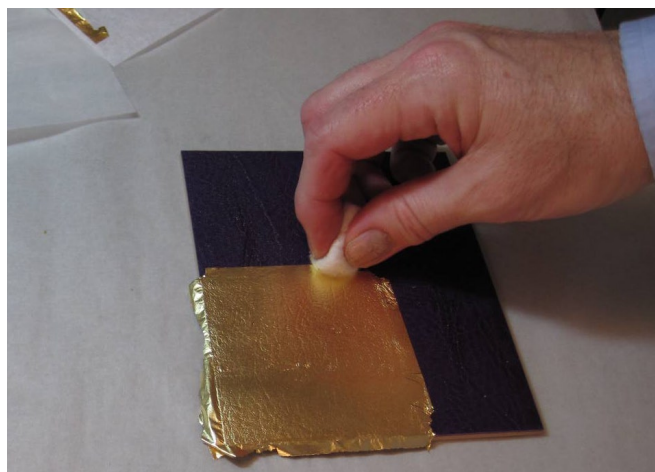
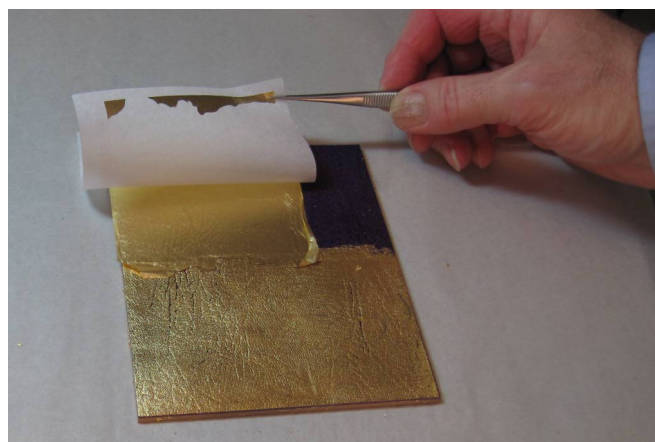


Figure 6. Remove the silicone release paper and use a ball of cotton to gently lift the loose gold along the edge of the first leaf. This will prevent the formation of sharp lines along the edges of the leaf. Repeat the first two steps (Figures 4 and 5) with another leaf.



Figure 7-8. Gently remove the excess gold overlapping the first leaf, and continue with another leaf. Repeat as needed, taking care not to adhere where the leaves overlap.



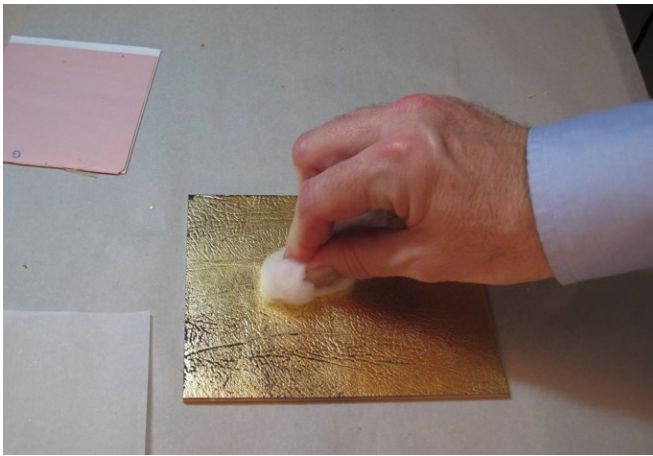


Figure 9. When the area is covered with gold, go over the entire surface with the tacking iron, trying not to dwell too long in any one area. Remove the silicone release paper and use a cotton ball to remove loose flakes of gold on the surface. To remove gold on leather where it isn't wanted, use a cotton ball or Q-tip dampened with a very small amount of lighter fluid. Do not use polishing irons to brighten up the gold. If the leather was glaired correctly, and the right amount of heat was used, there should be no need for polishing. If the glairing and heat are wrong, no amount of polishing will help.

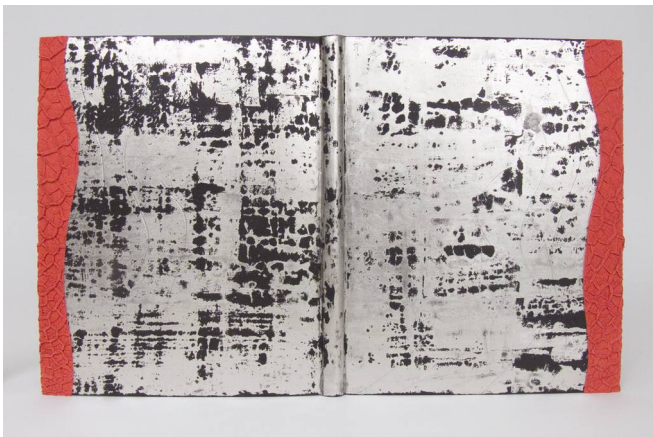


Figure 10. *A Selection of Poems on the Theme of Water*. Calfskin, palladium leaf, cow stomach. 2008. The mottled appearance of the palladium leaf was achieved by intentionally allowing the Fixor to pool up and dry unevenly.

2. Gilding Paper and Vellum with Miniaturum

Large sheets of handmade and machine made papers can be successfully gilt using either Jade 403 PVA or Miniaturum. The following instructions use Miniaturum, which was developed for calligraphers for gilding on flexible substrates; the process is the same for gilding vellum and parchment. There are two kinds of Miniaturum: yellow Miniaturum is used in place of bole for traditional manuscript illumination where the thickness of the bole results in a “domed” surface to the gold. White

(sometimes called clear) Miniaturum was developed for gilding when a flat result is desired, therefore white Miniaturum is most useful for surface gilding. Miniaturum is a proprietary formula, so its ingredients are unknown. Miniaturum is manufactured by Kölner in Germany; they also market a product called “Instacoll” that appears similar to white Miniaturum, with a different drying time. I haven't used Instacoll and therefore cannot evaluate it as an adhesive for surface gilding.



Figure 11. *The Possibility of an Early Fall*. Gilt flyleaves and doublures. 2006.

I generally gilt a sheet oversized, then cut it down for use in a design or as endpapers. For a gilt flyleaf, gilt only after folding the sheet, but before trimming to final size. I usually fold the sheet, then unfold it and apply the adhesive over the flyleaf and extending very slightly past the fold onto the conjoined leaf; gilding just past the fold ensures that the gold doesn't appear broken in the gutter. Gilt paper can be trimmed after gilding, but it is best done on a board shears with the gold side down on a sheet of clean paper directly on the bed of the shears. Using a blade and straightedge to trim gilt paper sometimes dislodges the gold along the cut line.

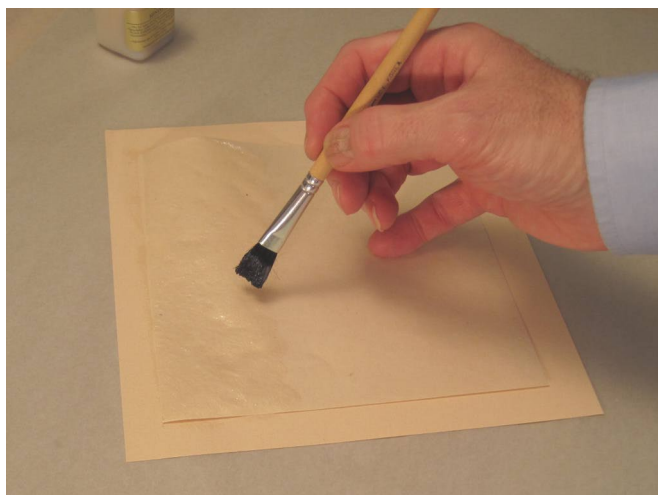


Figure 12. Miniaturum is applied to the surface using a soft brush. There is a tendency for streaks to show, so stippling is useful. If the Miniaturum appears to go on too thickly, it can be thinned with a drop or two of ox gall. Only a single coat of Miniaturum is needed, assuming that the surface is coated evenly overall. Allow the Miniaturum to dry to the touch, then put the sheet between medium weight Hollytex and boards under a light weight until needed. Miniaturum gilds best if given a drying time of eight hours; after drying, there is a window of approximately twenty hours during which it can be gilded. Past that time, the gilding will be uneven. Apply Miniaturum in the evening, and gild the next day.

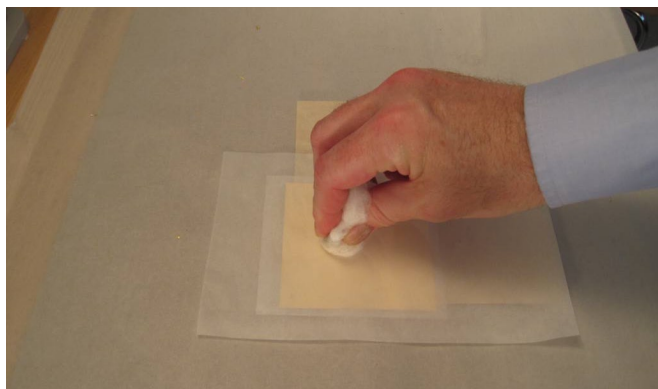


Figure 13. Place the sheet of paper on a smooth hard surface with a sheet of silicone release paper underneath. Pick up the transfer leaf and place it face down with the gold against the Miniaturum, then place a sheet of silicone release paper over it. Use a cotton ball to rub vigorously but smoothly over the entire sheet to loosely adhere the gold. The tacking iron is not used with Miniaturum; rubbing alone will generate enough heat and pressure to re-activate the Miniaturum and adhere the gold to the paper. Do not rub too strongly at the edge of the leaf; leave some of the leaf loose. After the first rubbing, remove the tissue and put another leaf overlapping the first; give this leaf an initial rubbing, and gently brush away the gold overlapping the first leaf.

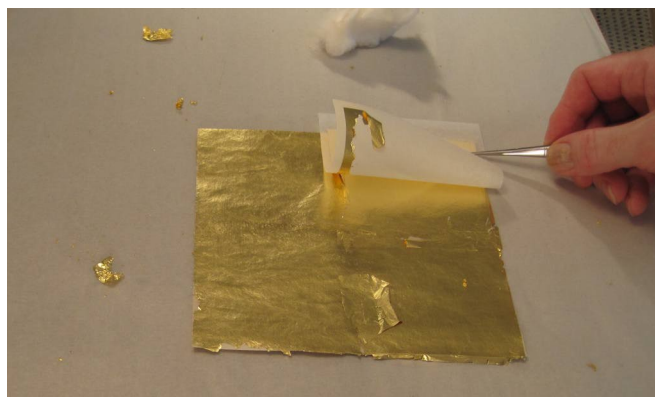


Figure 14. Repeat the process with more leaves of gold, allowing them to overlap without creating sharp lines where the leaf ends.

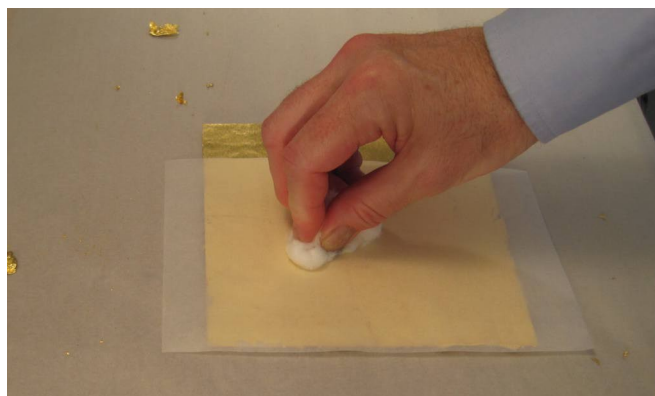


Figure 15. When the entire surface is covered with gold, and the overlapping gold between the leaves has been brushed off, cover the sheet with silicone release paper and rub vigorously with a cotton pad.



Figure 16. Remove the silicone release paper and burnish directly on the gold with a clean un-used cotton ball. More burnishing will yield a brighter gold, but will also tend to emphasize any flaws or dull areas. This final burnishing will bring glowing results.

3. Gilding Papyrus and Paper with PVA

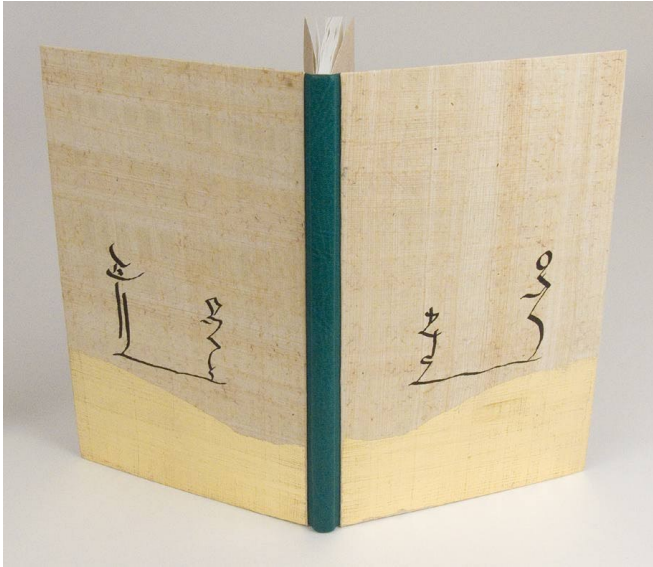


Figure 17. *Designing the Mentoring Stamp*. Goatskin, papyrus, gold leaf, engrossing ink. 2008.

I use Jade 403 PVA when gilding papyrus, and the steps are much the same as for gilding leather. This technique can also be used for gilding paper. Straight PVA can be used for gilding, but it tends to result in a thick layer of glue between the gold and the papyrus. PVA is not a penetrating adhesive, but a gap-filler, which fills in the space between the gold and the substrate. Thick glue will leave a spongy layer between the gold and the substrate. PVA works best if thinned to a skim milk consistency using distilled water; when a brush is dipped into the PVA, the liquid should drip easily off the brush. During drying, the moisture will evaporate, leaving only a very thin coat of adhesive on the surface. Try not to let the tacking iron dwell too long in any one spot because paper may cockle from differential heating.

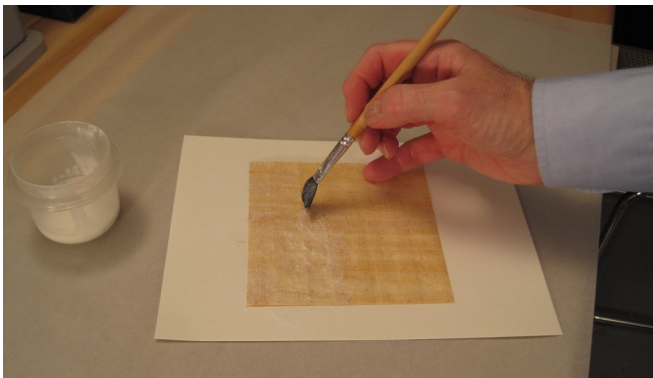


Figure 18. Begin by stippling a single thin coat of Jade 403 PVA onto the papyrus. Allow it to dry to the touch, then put the sheet between medium weight Hollytex and boards under a light weight until needed. The papyrus can be gilt as soon as it is thoroughly dry using the steps outlined above in Figures

4-9, but the tacking iron must be set lower, approximately 200 degrees.



Figure 19. A variety of agate, hematite and Teflon burnishers are used for polishing papyrus and paper gilt using PVA. After going over the entire surface with the tacking iron a final time, leave the silicone release paper in place and burnish lightly with a T-form agate burnisher. (Some agate burnishers used for edge gilding have a slightly domed face, which makes them problematic for surface gilding; use only an agate burnisher with a flat face.)

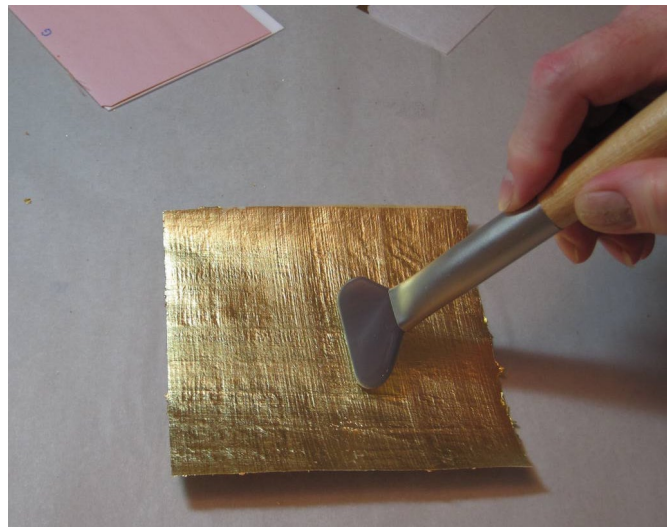


Figure 20. Remove the silicone release paper and burnish directly on the gold, increasing the amount of pressure with repeated passes over the entire surface of the sheet. Burnish from different directions to avoid uneven brightness on the finished gold.

4. Gilding shapes

My original interest in surface gilding lay in gilding entire bindings, but these techniques can also be used to create gilt shapes within a design. I have tried various types of masks and tapes to create designs on paper and papyrus bindings, but have been dissatisfied with the uneven or jagged edge they sometimes leave. I use a pattern cut from card stock and lightly draw around the edges with a fine pencil, then paint glaire over the pencil line with a 000 pointed sable brush. A steady hand will produce a very even line. Using the larger brush, glaire the interior of the shape. The gilding process is the same. For small shapes, a hound's tooth burnisher will be more useful than a T-form burnisher.



Figure 21. *Transmissions of the Mist*. Papyrus, Tyvek, vellum, cochineal ink, gold leaf. 2006.

For leather, cut a pattern of the design on stiff card stock and use drafting tape to adhere it to the binding. Outline the shape on the binding using a very fine bone folder. Use a 000 pointed sable brush to apply glaire into the boned line, then glaire up to the boned line with a larger brush and gild as described above. Cut the transfer leaf so that very little extends beyond the boned line. Excess gold that sticks to leather where it isn't wanted can be removed with lighter fluid on a Q-tip.

5. Touch-ups

If the binding was glaired evenly and the temperature and dwell time of the tacking iron are sufficient, multiple layers of gold shouldn't be necessary. Successive layers of gold will rub off more easily, but if the gilding is weak or uneven overall, with many gaps and cracks, gild again over the entire surface with a second layer of leaf. If there are bare spots or gaps in otherwise uniform gilding, carefully re-glaire the bare areas using a small pointed brush, taking care not to get glaire on top of the existing gold, where it will dull the finish. Allow the glaire to dry and re-gild.

Surface gilding is like any other craftwork: doing it right the first time is a lot easier than fixing it later.



Figure 22. *Crimson Fears*. Gold leaf, palladium leaf, calfskin, inkjet print on kozo paper. 2003.

6. Tools and Materials

Fixor and B.S. Glaire:

TALAS <<http://www.talasonline.com>>

JHS glaire:

Hewits <<http://www.hewit.com>>

Miniatum:

New York Central Art Supply <<http://www.nycentralart.com>>

John Neal Books <<http://www.johnnealbooks.com/>>

Scribblers UK <<http://www.scribblers.co.uk>>

Falkiners <<http://store.falkiners.com/>>

Transfer leaf:

Gilded Page <<http://www.gildedplanet.com/>>

Burnishers and gilders size brush:

Conservation Support Services <<http://www.silcom.com/~css>>

James Reid-Cunningham studied bookbinding at the North Bennet Street School in Boston and is the president of the Guild of Book Workers. Formerly the conservator of the Graduate School of Design at Harvard University, he is currently the chief conservator of the Boston Athenaeum. In 2006 he received the Distinguished Alumni Award from the North Bennet Street School. He is the adjunct lecturer in the History, Technology and Conservation of the Book in the Art Conservation Department at Buffalo State College and has taught widely. He is the creator of design bindings and book art that explore traditional bookbinding structures in conjunction with modern materials. He has exhibited his books nationally and internationally and is the proprietor of Hematite Press. Website at <<http://www.reid-cunningham.com>>.

In Memoriam David P. Bourbeau

By Barbara B. Blumenthal and Henry Lyman

David P. Bourbeau, 67, bookbinder, book designer, and Smith School trustee, died peacefully at home on August 22, in the company of family and friends.



*David Bourbeau in his Thistle Bindery ca. 1988.
Photograph by Margaret Taylor*

Born January 3, 1942, he grew up in Holyoke, the ninth of ten children. At age eleven he became intrigued by the shapes of letters while watching a sign painter apply gold leaf to a store window. After taking a correspondence course in sign lettering he went on to study fine and applied arts in Provincetown and New York. His arts education was greatly influenced by his older brother, Arthur, a painter who had studied with Matisse in Paris.



*David Bourbeau with Daniel Gehnrich and Arno Werner at
the latter's 90th birthday.
Photograph by Babette Gehnrich*

In 1965 David moved to Northampton, where he and his first wife Nancy Cowen opened a successful craft gallery called Faux Pas. He was introduced to the art of the book by Leonard Baskin, and in 1972 he sold his business and took a two-year apprenticeship with master bookbinder Arno Werner. In 1975 he established the Thistle Bindery, located at various times in Northampton, Easthampton, and Florence, and in 1977 he took on the first of his many students and apprentices.

A consummate bookbinder, he designed and constructed strong, innovative bindings for fine press books while also working in book restoration and art conservation. Having coined the word “bibliotect,” or book-architect, he observed that a binding “is not merely a fancy cover, the facade, but all of the elements, seen and unseen, that form the foundation and structure of the book.” This is borne out in his many organically unified editions, among them Poe’s *The Raven*, with graceful wing-like forms emerging from a raven-black binding, and Robert Francis’s posthumous collection *Late Fire*, *Late Snow*, whose handmade paper cover contains gold-tooled lines representing the shape of the title poem. Both of these books were bound using fine papers, a bookbinding material championed by David.



*David Bourbeau's binding of Poe's *The Raven* from
<[http://www.guildofbookworkers.org/
gallery/100anniversary/retro/Bourbeau.shtml](http://www.guildofbookworkers.org/gallery/100anniversary/retro/Bourbeau.shtml)>*

Working in close collaboration with other bookbinders, as well as printers, designers, and artists, he organized local and national book exhibitions, including, in Northampton in 1987, “Form & Content: The Art of the Book in the Pioneer Valley,” a two-week series of lectures, readings, workshops, and demonstrations covering every aspect of book arts in the region. David was also a founding member of the New England Chapter of the Guild of Book Workers, serving as chapter president for two terms, and was chair of the Hampshire County Historical Records Advisory Board. His

craftsmanship, generosity, and friendship enriched the entire book arts community in this area and far beyond.

David devoted much of the last twelve years of his life to Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School, serving on its Board of Trustees for six consecutive terms. As a tradesman and artisan, he was passionate about vocational education. His vision for the school was based on its original purpose-to produce well-educated tradespeople and well-educated farmers- and on his concern for the future directions of its agricultural programs and the use and protection of its land.

Believing that the school farm should be a model for future generations, he helped the school refocus its resources on contemporary issues such as the importance of locally grown food and agricultural sustainability.

Thanks to his efforts, the state of Massachusetts recently approved the school's application for a new agricultural complex.

In 2002 David was diagnosed with adrenal cancer, but after a year-long period of treatment and recovery, he was able to able to continue working almost until his decease. Surrounded by his family, colleagues, and friends, he was buried Monday in Mount Cemetery in Chesterfield.

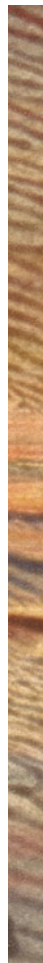
He is survived by his wife of twenty-one years, Marie Waechter, daughters Anja Waechter-Bourbeau and Jennifer Bourbeau Joyal, brothers Richard Bourbeau and William Bourbeau, and sisters Joan Hart, Norma Raftery, Ellie Moriarty, and Carol Burrows, and many nieces and nephews.

A celebration of David's life was held on on Sunday, September 27th at the Unitarian Society in Northampton, Massachusetts. Memorial gifts may be made to Smith Vocational Building Fund and mailed to Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School, 80 Locust Street, Northampton MA 01060. An obituary appeared in the Daily Hampshire Gazette, Northampton, MA, on August 27th.

David also wrote an essay on Clarence and Ruth Kennedy and their Cantina Press, <<http://www.smith.edu/libraries/lib/rarebook/cantinaad.pdf>>, and a personal essay about Leonard Baskin and the Gehenna Press in the 2004 publication, *Paradise Printed and Bound: Book Arts in Northampton and Beyond* (available from Collective Copies, Florence MA) His work was featured in many GBW exhibitions, including the NE chapter 2008 exhibition *Inspired Design*. More information on the exhibition can be found at <<http://www.smith.edu/libraries/fyi/521.htm>>.

Henry Lyman's work has appeared in periodicals, including *Poetry* and *The Nation*, and in two collections. He edited Robert Francis's posthumously published poems *Late Fire*, *Late Snow* and an anthology of New England poetry titled *After Frost*.

Barbara B. Blumenthal is currently the book arts specialist in the Mortimer Rare Book Room at Smith College; she also has a bookbinding studio in her home in Northampton, MA. Barbara first met David Bourbeau in 1973 when she was an undergraduate at Smith and both she and David were studying with master bookbinder Arno Werner. Besides being dear friends, she and David collaborated on numerous publications, exhibitions, and bindings.



The Hybrid Book: Intersection and Intermedia

A report by Alisa Fox, Dorothy Krause, and Shawn K. Simmons.

The word hybrid is defined by Webster's as "anything derived from heterogeneous sources, or composed of elements of different or incongruous kinds." Does, combining in unexpected ways materials, language or anything meant to convey information, ideas, and emotions fit this definition?

I think it clearly describes the nature of our book arts world as we move forward into the 21st century. Book artists are constantly challenged with defining art and craft, looking to the past for tradition and forward for new possibilities. The Hybrid Book Conference hosted by the University of the Arts in Philadelphia June 4-6, 2009, was successful in creating a dialog that challenged and discussed those directives. The panel-based conference focused on the flexible and complex nature of the book, through both its multiple levels of interpretation – two-dimensional, three-dimensional and time-based – and its relevance to many different fields of study. The speakers explored the past, present and future of book arts in such varied areas as printing (letterpress, offset, and digital), academia, artist collaboration, technology and content generation. In total, eight intriguing panels were offered, two during every panel session with each attendee able to enjoy four full panels throughout the conference. Regrettably, attendees were not able to see all the panels.

The Opening

The event began on Thursday evening with introductory comments by Susan Viguers, Director of the MFA Book Arts/ Printmaking program at UArts and Conference Coordinator, as well as remarks from the President of UArts, Sean T. Buffington, and Dean of the College, Stephen Tarantal, emphasizing the impact and relevance of both the Book

Arts program and this conference on the community. This was followed by Steve Miller of the University of Alabama's MFA in the Book Arts Program interviewing with Gunnar Kaldewey and Hedi Kyle - an enlightening and powerful kickoff to the conference. The question and answer structure demonstrated that our similarities and differences as artists show up in very distinct ways. Kaldewey and Kyle have interesting similarities in their German background. However, their work processes are very different. Hedi Kyle's past as a graphic designer shows itself in her design of both pages and structures and her experience as a book conservator has influenced the way she works with tactile materials and

creates forms. These fanciful, interactive musical arrangements of color, folds, and found objects challenge our visual intellect. But what is particularly exciting about Kyle's work is her ability to constantly take risk and challenge her process, as seen, for example, in her piece *Soap Opera*, where she layered digital translucent images of soap ends.



*Steve Miller, Gunnar Kaldewey, and Hedi Kyle at the Opening.
Photo courtesy of Steve Miller.*

Gunnar Kaldewey also uses materials in a profound way but through a more traditional press approach. His background as a rare book dealer impacts his work. Frequently collaborating with other artists and writers, Kaldewey creates an extraordinary sense of purpose to a particular text. Paper artists, visual artists, writers, and bookbinders, under Kaldewey's guiding hand, breathe new life and vision into ideas. Embossment, metal, foil and handmade paper are examples of the material connections that Kaldewey makes with a diversity of texts that span time and countries.

Irma Boom was not part of the evening interview, but was a key participant in the exhibition at the Rosenwald-Wolf Gallery, *The Hybrid Book: Irma Boom, Gunnar A. Kaldewey, and Hedi Kyle*, that allowed us to see three very different book artists. Boom takes a hold of graphic design and color and punches forward using offset printing to her advantage. Gatefolds, tabs and the pure physicality of 200 plus pages that have been trimmed to reveal strata give us a new way to look at books.

The Conference

The panels were successful in inspiring ideas from current letterpress and typography practice to the impact of current social and political content/practice. Technology today is always a conversation and the discussion of the world of offset and digital tools and applications lets us see that we continue to push our current boundaries. We tend to get caught up in the immediate issues in front of us – whatever those issues may be – but an environment such as the Hybrid Book Conference challenges us to look outside our bubble. Miller, Kaldewey and Kyle, with Boom in the exhibition, managed to provide a solid platform to address many issues.

The conference began in earnest on Friday morning with four possible sessions to attend. In the first session, speakers looked to the future of the book arts from academic and pragmatic directions with two coinciding lectures: Book Arts in Academia (see inset for further discussion) and The Future of Letterpress. In the second session, attendees could choose from Modes of Production: Collaborative Processes or Offset Applications: Then and Now.

The latter session provided a thoughtful and intelligent conversation about the use and relevance of offset printing within its historical context. After Tony White's complete account of offset's timeline, Clifton Meador then proceeded to expose offset as a subjective medium, a technology just like any other which fits into, or possibly reflects, the culture of the time as well as an artist's interest in form. He reminded us that the process of offset printing has its own voice and meaning related to its place in history; because we think of offset as the norm, as somehow neutral, we tend to forget that this tool does have a voice, with variations and translations of color, by reflecting its history in commerce and advertising, in implying its neutrality. In contrast to Meador's relatively academic perspective, Patty Smith finished the session with a personal history of her relationship with offset, framing it with the many dichotomies she finds while using the process. She explained that offset can be both rigid and versatile, genderless and macho, demanding and easy-going, amongst other pairings.

Panels on day two explored the hybrid nature of relationships that occur in bookmaking: text relating to form and image, collaborations between artists, the book relating to culture through environment and technology. In Text and the Hybrid Book, panelists considered the many ways a book artist might approach the use of text in context, content and form. Of note in this session, which was moderated by Elysa Voshell with panelists Jen Bervin, Julie Chen and Robin Price, was the discussion surrounding generating and finding text, and the journey to determine, manipulate, and edit it once

found. Chen revealed her brainstorming and mind-mapping techniques for text generation, while Bervin and Price shared personal methods and rules to finding and editing secondary sources.

One of the final sessions, The Reciprocity of Books and Digital Media, moderated by Lori Spencer with panelists Patti Belle Hastings, Margot Lovejoy and Sue O'Donnell, focused on the importance of bookmakers keeping technology in their sights as we move forward in the field. O'Donnell effectively explained that books and websites have much in common when looking at the relationship of author to audience: both involve touch, movement, the ability often to add comments and interact, and therefore the opportunity for the audience to become, in part, author as well. This was underscored all the more when the final speaker, Hastings, pointed out how people today covet their mobile devices much as they might a well-read and beloved book.

O'Donnell, and later Lovejoy, pointed out that bookmakers can expand on both the experience for the audience and the scope of readership by embracing different modes of technology in bookmaking by using many media: web, motion, twitter, interactivity, print on demand, PDFs, etc. Finally, Hastings completed the panel with an entertaining and thoughtful discussion of how the digital form is not only influencing the landscape of book arts, but also how bookmakers are now commenting on the subjective form of these digital tools through their work (reminiscent of Meador's remarks from the previous day), most notably Rob Cockerham's "Kindling: the Wireless Wooden Reading Device" (see <<http://www.cockeyed.com/incredible/kindling/kindling01.shtml>>).

As a final note, Susan Viguers has informed us that The Hybrid Book volunteers are expecting to have podcasts of all the conference sessions available to the general public at <<http://www.hybridbook.org/conference.htm>> before you read this review. We highly recommend visiting them to further explore these relevant and inspiring panels.

The Hybrid Book Fair

The Hybrid Book Fair accompanied the panel discussions and consisted of 150 exhibitors occupying 74 tables on two floors of UArts' Gershman Hall. So that there were no conflicting programs the fair was scheduled in the afternoons after the panels allowing conference attendees to devote their full attention to the work being exhibited.

Participating artists, presses and organizations were diverse. While most of the artists and presses were showing their books, Shana Leino had a table selling her elegant steel and carved elk bone tools and Oak Knoll had both books



published by their press and a selection of books related to the book arts. Drew Cameron, Co-Director of the Combat Paper Project and contributing founder of the Warrior Writers Project, was part of the panel “Book Art in the Social Sphere” and also had a booth on the book fair floor selling paper and books made from the uniforms of veterans. The conference organizers encouraged student participation with a reduced price on shared tables and they were well represented with innovative offerings including Robert Lewis papers made from fruits and vegetables. Exhibiting organizations included the Delaware Valley Guild of Book Workers; the Center for Book Arts in NYC; Philadelphia Center for the Book; and the Visual Studies Workshop in Rochester.

Two of the largest displays were by booksellers Priscilla Juvelis at one entrance and Bill and Vicky Stewart of Vamp & Tramp across the room at the opposite entrance. Occupying three tables each, they were exhibiting the books of artists they represented and were also looking to add new artists, which they both were able to do. Since most book artists are happier making books than marketing them, there are some very happy book artists.

Viewers included exhibitors and vendors, when they could get away from their tables, conference attendees, speakers, and the general public. Ruth Rodgers (Wellesley College), Jae Rossman (Yale), Laurie Whitehall Chong (RISD) and Arthur Jaffe (Jaffe Center for the Book, Florida Atlantic University) were among the diligent curators and special collections librarians who spent the entire 10 hours the fair was open looking carefully through the work that was presented, and despite budgetary constraints, purchased books to add to their collections.

Adjacent to the book fair, on the upper level, was *800,000: Acknowledge. Remember. Renew*. This installation of 800,000 pages in 2,500 books was displayed in 100 coffin-like crates – one page for each victim and one crate for each day of the tribal genocide that occurred in Rwanda in 1994.

Viewers could make a donation and place their handprint on a page of one of the books. William Snyder, who created this project, presented it at the panel, “Intersection + Intermedia”.

At 4 pm on the second day, awards and purchase prizes were given by Bright Hill Word and Image Gallery, the College Book Art Association, Columbia University, The Free Library of Philadelphia, The Jaffe Center for Book Arts, Journal of Artists' Books, Philadelphia Center for the Book, Swarthmore College, Temple University, The University of the Arts, the University of Pennsylvania, Wellesley College

and Yale University. Three of the awards were received by SunYoung Kang, a 2007 MFA graduate of the UA program, whose elegantly cut and burned boxes deserved all the acclaim she was given.

Final notes: A project as large as this conference can't be perfect and requires a tremendous amount of work, in this case by graduate and undergraduate students, alumni, faculty and volunteers. The small but dedicated leadership team showed a vision that for a first conference was overwhelming. The Hybrid conference 2009 was born successfully, with many things learned along the way. It's important to note that none of this would have happened without the inspiration and hard work of Susan Viguers, Amanda D'Amico, Michelle Wilson and Mary Tasillo.

These four women, all artists in their own right, took the last two years, to build this “hybrid” conference. All in all, these women managed to create an environment ripe with opportunity for the whole book arts community. The only complaint was that UArts has no plans to host similar events on a regular basis.

As a final note, in addition to the podcasts of the panels, JAB26 (Fall 2009) Brad Freeman will review the work of William Snyder and Antonio Serra both of whom received the JAB Emerging Artist Award for Exemplary Work at the Hybrid Conference. Snyder's work encourages viewers to




Monday Editions (above) and Memory Press (below) at the Hybrid Book Fair.



participate in a larger project of building basic infrastructure in Rwanda. Serra's altered publications, pretending to be mainstream magazines, in fact deliver information that the US media generally ignore about our wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

In addition, Amanda D'Amico and Michelle Wilson have written a review of the Hybrid Conference which includes descriptions of the panels, the exhibitions (Kaldewey, Kyle), the alumni exhibition, and the book arts fair.

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Alisa Fox is currently a print, paper, installation and book artist in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, with her work focused on texture and tactile exploration based on the social structure and the culture in rural Nebraska. She has recently completed her Masters of Fine Art degree at The University of the Arts in Philadelphia. She has exhibited internationally and nationally, most recently curating and working with the Iraq Veterans Against the War and the Peoples Republic of Paper in an exhibition in Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts. She currently is exhibited and represented by Editions Limited Gallery of Indianapolis, and was previously Associate Professor/Program Chair of the Fine Art department at Ivy Tech Community College in Indianapolis. She is online at <<http://alisafox.com>>

*Dorothy Simpson Krause work includes large-scale mixed media pieces, artist books and book-like objects that bridge between these two forms, but until this book fair had never shown her books for sale. She is the author of *Book + Art: Handcrafting Artists' Books* published by North Light in 2009 and co-author of *Digital Art Studio: Techniques for combining inkjet printing with traditional art materials*, published by Watson-Guption in 2004. She can be reached at <<http://www.DotKrause.com>> or <<http://www.ViewpointEditions.com>>.*

Shawn Kathleen Simmons is a book artist and graphic designer based near Kent, Ohio where she is an Assistant Professor of Visual Communication Design at Kent State University. She received her Master of Fine Arts from Rhode Island School of Design in 2007, where she studied design and bookmaking. Inspired by her love of photography, literature, art history and anthropology, Shawn has focused her most recent creative explorations on unusual formats and structures with which to convey her ideas. She can be reached at <shawnsimmons@gmail.com>.

Book Arts Education in Transition

A conversation between Steve Miller and
Shawn K. Simmons

Shawn Kathleen Simmons (SKS): One of the first sessions at the Hybrid Book: Intersection + Intermedia conference was called Book Arts in Academia. A panel of four, Karen Wirth, Carrie Galbraith, Susan Johanknecht and Kyle Schlesinger, spoke to the ways in which book arts are being taught at their institutions, and how they have integrated new media, materials and technology into their classrooms. Some great ideas were discussed and suggested: looking to special collections, visiting artists/critics, workshops, and other disciplines for inspiration; using journaling and writing exercises, especially in native languages, to develop text for books instead of relying on secondary text resources; encouraging exploration of new materials, technology and imagery, and thereby escaping from traditional paper and ink; and improving student experiences by teaching better critique skills, encouraging learning through process and dummy production, and creating opportunities for collaboration. It was a lively and useful discussion, especially for educators like me who are both new to teaching and to book arts.

During the period for questions, however, I found myself wondering why all innovations mentioned during the discussion were focused on the materials and technology being used and not necessarily on the possible future of our pedagogical choices as educators. It seemed to me that the discussion was still housed in a traditional critique-based classroom: teach technical skills or introduce primary sources > pose problem > student(s) develop a solution > class/instructor critique work > student(s) redevelop solution (let's call this the Critic/Explorer model). While I see no inherent problems with this structure -- it has worked exceptionally well for many decades -- I wanted to ask the panelists if they saw any possible transformations in this model while we continue to watch our end-products innovate so rapidly. The first response came from Karen Wirth, who reminded me that common practice in art education methodology has changed, so that the problems posed more often incorporate the outside world, letting projects enter into a more learner-centered and socially-conscious domain. With that said, several other attendees chose to comment and I began a tete-a-tete with Steve Miller, Professor since 1988 and Coordinator of the M.F.A. in the Book Arts Program at the University of Alabama. We spoke after the session and decided to continue our conversation by email.

So, Steve, here is my first broad question for you: having worked in book arts education for over twenty years now

and having watched the materials and technology change significantly in bookmaking, how do you perceive the shifts in pedagogical approaches to the book arts?

Steve Miller (SM): This is such an interesting question and one I will write about around the edges. When I came to Alabama to teach, fresh from making books in New York City, I found a teaching tradition wrapped up in a Master-Apprentice model. The Master designed a book. Proofed sheets were posted, and the apprentices printed the piece as per the finalized proofs. This worked well for a certain kind of teacher-student experience, one that respected the teacher's body of experience and insisted on practice practice practice under direct supervision—a European, historical model of doing things that had worked for a very long time. It insisted that students respect and emulate the craft traditions of letterpress printing, hand papermaking, and bookbinding. The basic tenets I wholeheartedly respect: you must draw before you can paint; practice, and then practice some more; listen to people who have more experience than you do, and try to learn from that experience.

The problem I had with this model of teaching was two-fold. First, I saw students who were filled with their own ideas coming from different backgrounds but clearly wanting to create their own books and create them *now*. And second, I have always seen the making of books as a living, breathing process, very much in flux until the moment the books are bound. Even then they may change as they age or by design. To me bookmaking should be fun as well as precise.

I am a total geek about many things, but technology in particular. I'll say it right now — I love the Vandercook Proofing Press, as well as the more historical letterpress equipment, but to me they are tools. Lovely, feisty, beautiful, but a means to an end—the printed object. Don't get me going about Apple products, or podcasting, or the Web because they are all tools that I love as well. And let's not even start about the excitement and pleasure I get in encouraging, challenging, people to bring their best game and unique talents and life perspectives to making their own books.

People need a starting point—a solid compass to navigate the bookmaking journey. For me, true compass points are the crafts of making books by hand artfully. Let's carefully set type in a composing stick and take a clean proof on the Vandercook. Let's learn everything possible about the press itself and what needs to be done at the press to make an impression as perfect as possible. Let's figure out how a letterpress studio works and how to keep it going. Let's learn how to slow down and go at the speed of the tools, whatever they are. Folding paper is a craft and an art. How do you tune your eyes, brain, heart, and hands to that simple task, and



get it right? There is music to be made here, but let's learn everything possible about the notes and the spaces between, and then decide on how perfectly or imperfectly the book will be produced.

As long as books are physical objects and not theories or conceptual clouds, the physical making of them is going to be a significant factor. Books are stage sets for investigating content and their subsequent physicality. Talking about something only gets you so far, and then the rubber needs to meet the road.

So, in a roundabout kind of way what I'm saying is that the basic practices of learning the art of a bookmaking craft still needs to be done in the bed of a press, or with a bonefolder. The roots need to take hold in the fertile earth of papers and tools and tangled linen thread first. Does that mean holding to ancient traditions of apprenticeships? Probably not, but maybe for some. Does it mean that nothing else counts? Not for me. You will have to pry my Apple laptop from my cold, dead hands. Don't cut my wireless connection to the internet and the world of ideas and inspirations there. But do make sure I can walk before running.

SKS: Your comments about a Master/Apprentice model show an obvious difference in pedagogical approach from the model I originally suggested of Critic/Explorer. I think we are setting up two obvious tracks here on which a bookmaker/artist should be trained: the craft and detail of creation and binding (being taught in most situations, as far as I can tell, in a Master/Apprentice manner); and the conceptual development – finding the content, visuals and format appropriate to that concept. Have you seen any significant changes over the years in the pedagogical approaches to the teaching of content and concept development? If so, do you see them continuing to shift as we innovate in materials and formats?

SM: Shawn, I think you may be trying to fit what I have said into one corner or another. I actually find a Master/Apprentice model to be fairly stifling, and feel that a more organic and fluid approach is more interesting, productive, and certainly more fun. I found the M/A approach that was in place here to be too static. The learning of the art and craft of the book is much larger than just learning the bench, press, editorial, and production skills.

Perhaps twenty-five years ago the dialog might have been primarily focused on the skill or artisan side of book production. In the earliest days of Paper & Book Intensive, the conversation that occurred about handmade paper and bookbinding was in the sharing of basic skill sets and the fundamentals of the crafts. There were great AhHa! moments.

As these crafts were recovered/revitalized the conversation has moved more toward content. What seems to be different in 2010, is that the base level for the bar is much higher. More people know the basics of letterpress printing, bookbinding, and hand papermaking. More individuals have experienced workshops and have ready access to books about bookmaking. More people have seen exhibitions of books made by hand than ever before. More artists and authors have appropriated the equipment and methodologies of making books by hand to express themselves. So it is natural that content and expression of ideas be of vital concern to most people who create books.

The tools of hand bookmaking have changed, though sometimes not. My guess is that most everyone who teaches in the book arts, myself included, are intrigued by new tools and processes and how they might be employed to create books. Years ago when I bought an early photopolymer platemaker I was accused by some of turning my back on the traditions of letterpress printing. I felt that it would be unfair to send graduates out into the world unprepared for what might happen after metal type is no longer available. The internet, social networking, and digital media all have roles to play in the new book, and in learning about how to create the new book.

Your question is so interesting: have you seen any significant changes over the years in the pedagogical approaches to the teaching of content and concept development? Certainly there are classes at some institutions that deal with just this topic. But the topic itself implies, wonderfully, that we are at a point beyond the making of an object. And we are. Our fields have grown and makers have multiplied to the point where we can talk at length about content. And some talk about how content drives form.

In my classes at Alabama one interesting aspect is that we have students from a wide variety of backgrounds, from art and creative writing through Womens' Studies and the sciences. Each individual brings with him/her a strong desire to make books by hand, and a lifetime of experiences that come to bear on their work. Meaningful content means something very different to each and every person. And a significant part of the two years in classes is sussing out what that means to each person. This happens in almost each and every class, where ideas are floated and group discussions encouraged, and penetrating questions asked. And this is where craft has a strong role to play. The learning of the various crafts also, in addition to upping the production values of a project, acts as a stage set to ponder and wrestle with content issues and challenges. In that sense it seems to me that processes and materiality do affect content. Learning to make something as diligently as possible, whether using ancient



letterpress traditions or digital types printed on vellum-finished papers from words and images delivered as fan fiction on the web, creates opportunities for tangling with content development. The craft side works *with* the book artist to hone the content of the object being created. These parts are forever linked in furious dialog until the piece is finished.

My thought is that in the past decades as skills have been honed and more tools have become available to the book artist, that any teacher who is alive and kicking must invariably fold a continuous discussion about content throughout the education of new book artists, and that the surge of available technologies creates more opportunities to do so, in the context of the making.

Do you see content development as a distinctly different or separate vein to mine during the teaching of book arts?

SKS: I have to admit that I do, to some extent. In the program I teach (Visual Communication Design at Kent State University), we tend to separate out the learning of craft, which usually comes in the first two years, from the learning of content which tends to be taught in upperclass and graduate courses. While this is very much a design program, which is embedded in the School of Communication Information and not the School of Art, the history of the program still derives its curriculum and pedagogy from a Bauhaus model, where the study of materials and form start the learning process and then concept is eventually added in. This is clearly a necessity to some extent: we can conceive and consider concept all we want, but that concept cannot make it to form without understanding the tools by which to make the form; and inspiration clearly can also come from getting to the root of a tool or material.

However, I and some of my colleagues would like to see the blurring of those boundaries between form and concept to some extent in the curriculum; harnessing the early enthusiasm of our students, while still teaching them how to direct and control their creative energies, seems like the best of both worlds. Would you be willing to describe an example of the more fluid and organic approach you now take to your combination of content and form in current classes?

SM: The premise I always make with all students is to never print anything they don't love. I have to be crazy about whatever is going on the page before committing the time and effort it takes to create a handmade piece. This may sound indulgent or rarified to someone who teaches graphic design, but our purposes are a bit different. We are training book artists, printers, binders, papermakers, and historians of the book. You begin by teaching design. When we work and create in the bed of the press we are wrapping the craft aspects

around the nugget of the content. I do not collect equipment and type for the sake of having it. I couldn't begin to teach a class in letterpress printing without something interesting to print. That being said, with beginning students the content development may be something they fear, or fear they don't have the skills to judge what is good content. With these folks I may have to treat them with kidd gloves and guide them along as they add more and more of themselves into each project.

A first project is often the creation of a low-relief printing plate from plywood, muslin, and acrylic gel medium as the glue that binds it all together. Inking and printing the dried plate likely reveals happy accidents. From that printed surface the students begin to explore what words and images reveal themselves, and what type and colors are evoked. It's a slow build/burn process where an individual reacts on the fly to what is being created. With each new project I hope an individual's confidence grows in creating content.

I understand that for some institutions who have a mandate to train designers that the crafts aspects may be introduced independent of content. But if the goal is to create book artists, those imbued with the art and craft of making books by hand, then content and its delivery mechanisms naturally go hand in hand.

Shawn, I appreciate talking with you about this and feel that we are actually on the same page here in our desire to guide students who are passionate about the craft and care a great deal about the content.

SKS: Steve, I do want to thank you again for participating in this experience. It's definitely given me a lot to think about, and I hope that *The Bonefolder* readers find our conversation thought-provoking.

Shawn Kathleen Simmons is a book artist and graphic designer based near Kent, Ohio where she is an Assistant Professor of Visual Communication Design at Kent State University. She received her Master of Fine Arts from Rhode Island School of Design in 2007, where she studied design and bookmaking. Inspired by her love of photography, literature, art history and anthropology, Shawn has focused her most recent creative explorations on unusual formats and structures with which to convey her ideas. She can be reached at <shawnksimmons@gmail.com>.



Freestyle Books

Review of the exhibition at the State Library of Queensland (June 27 – October 12, 2008)

By Doug Spowart

When is a book not a book? When it is an exhibition.



The exhibition *Freestyle Books* (<http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/whats-on/exhibit/online/freestylebooks>) presented a significant selection of artists' book works from the Australian Library of Art of the State Library of Queensland. It also presented the conundrum of the book as an exhibit within the context of an art exhibition. *Freestyle Books* as an exhibition provided for the kind of experience one expects from a gallery presentation – a place through which one navigates one's path to view and experience artworks. Where necessary didactic panels and presentations guide and inform the viewer.

The *Freestyle Books* encounter began by entry into a cavernous exhibition space through auto opening doors that 'swished' apart with an enthusiasm as if to speed your progress into the space. Once inside, and eyes became accustomed to the low light levels, the exhibition presented itself as a collection of 32 display cases, four mid-space free standing walls, data projection screens and a private video projection area.

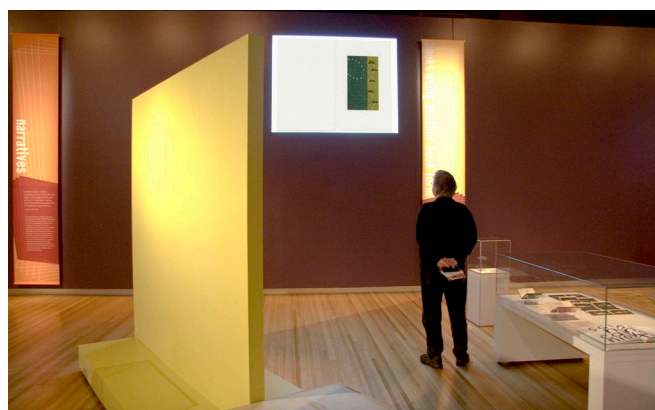
Walking between the cases the viewer encountered the books and the varied nature of the practice of artists' books based upon the curatorial selection process. Purveyors of artists' books would easily recognise the names of the makers,

the key works of each artists' oeuvre and new books not previously viewed. In the video space prominent Australian practitioners including Ann-Marie Hunter, Adele Outteridge and Peter Lyssiotis espoused their work practices and manifestoes.

A substantial complimentary catalogue included an essay by the curator, Senior Librarian Helen Cole, introducing the history, definition dilemmas and the diverse nature of the artists' book. A detailed description and analysis of selected books is included to provide exhibition visitors with a take-home dissertation on the practice. The concertina form of the catalogue booklet includes an exhibits list and thumbnail images of selected book pages. Additional exhibition support materials included a self-guided children's trail booklet, a teachers guide and a significant web presence¹ containing details of work, the collection and allied events.

For the exhibition viewer the sense of the book was tantalisingly strong. Seductively so, and yet, there is a tease at work. Books are about touch and the haptic (*Reading by Hand: The haptic evaluation of artists' books* By Gary Frost, *The Bonefolder*, Vol. 2 Nr.1, Fall 2005) experience. The exhibition goes far in presenting the works and viewers are led to the precipice but, for the lover of books the experience is a bit like being held captive by a lap dancer – you can look but can't...touch!

Every institutional exhibition of artists' books has the same issue – the books need preservation, protection and pampering. At the 2004 Mackay Artspace Artists' Book Forum Helen Cole discussed this issue. Her paper, entitled *To (G)Love and to hold*(3), lamented that "We would like to facilitate an experience of the book for all the senses, as close as possible to what the artist intended. Not all the works in the collection assist us in this aim." An attempt to appease the page-turning needs of the exhibition viewer is provided by several data projectors showing digitally enlarged pages scrolling through selected books. This indeed was an elegant resolution for the need for a book to be seen as the page-by-page sequenced narrative intended by their artist creator.



As if to present a view to future artists' books where contact with a physical object is supplanted by an electronic online offering was specially commissioned for *Freestyle Books*. The work *Transmission Lines, 1955 to 1974* by Linda Carroli is a personal family history, which links with her father's occupation of building electricity powerlines.

Ultimately the issue of the book as an exhibition throws up some interesting questions as to the nature of the book, the experience expected, the engagement of the work and what kind of connection one should expect from such a presentation. Central to any appraisal of the book as exhibition are factors around the nature of the book as an object, the works being part of a collection intended to be maintained forever, the ephemeral nature and fragility of some works as well as concerns for security and supervision of shows presented for prolonged periods. The exhibition just isn't a library shelf and in fact few, if any, of the books on show would even be found on a publically accessed library shelf.

The luxury afforded the artist when exhibiting their books in boutique specialist galleries where they may be seen by no more than a few hundred – with, or without white gloves, deals with the joy of presentation of the idea and not a concern for the longevity of the work. If hundreds or thousands of viewers handle the work they will inevitably destroy the object of their desire. The act of reading inevitably kinks pages, stresses spines and leaves the book embedded with creamy finger oils – in effect the DNA of all who have held and read. In *Freestyle Books*, one book – *Tonguey* a flipbook by Ron McBurnie, was available as a sacrifice display item. Its journey from opening night to when last seen two months later as a dilapidated and creased fan of pages is an illustration worth noting. According to Helen Cole this was the second replacement as the first was almost destroyed within 2 weeks.

Exhibitions are frequented by viewers; books are frequented by readers. Therein lies the conundrum for the artists' book exhibition presenter and the visitor to a book exhibition. To my mind the institutional artists' book exhibition where the books are encased must be considered as an invitation to view, handle and read the work later by requesting the books desired in a haptic-friendly viewing room. Exhibition visitors should be made aware that what they are observing in the showcase is akin to the taxidermied butterfly and that the glorious full flight version awaits them in an alternate context. An addition to future exhibitions should be a DL sized card onto which exhibition visitors can place a request to be advised when the book/s of their interest can be available for private viewing. It should be noted that the SLQ provided references to the availability

of reading room viewing in the *Freestyle Books* exhibition catalogue and banners. Notices were also placed near the visitor's book area and mail-outs have been made to exhibition visitors advising them of the availability of the books. Perhaps this issue is about education and that is exactly why exhibitions such as this are so important.

Ultimately the library is the home of the book and sitting in a library with book in hand, perhaps even in a comfortable chair, is a special privilege of the artists' book and the reader. This principle is one that is certainly recognised and championed by Helen Cole. In her 2004 paper (< http://www.artspacemackay.com.au/artists_book_forum/focus_on_artists_books_ii >, paper no longer available) she makes the following statement; "Libraries allow the intimate interaction with the works that often draws artists to the form in the first place. Readers may have unshared access to a work. They have complete control over the speed and sequence of viewing. They can feel the weight of the book and its pages, and smell the papers and inks."

Bravo to the State Library of Queensland for bringing out of the stacks and shelves this selection of artists' books in such a grand exhibition. A whole community of artists' bookmakers, collectors and commentators on the art have had an opportunity to see the art recognised significantly at institutional level. But the greater benefit for those who have encountered this exhibition and allied events is that they have had their excitement and enthusiasm for this art genre elevated. Visitors of the exhibition have now experienced the introductory viewing — that will lead, for many, to a later encounter and reading with selected books on level four of the State Library of Queensland. There the artist's communiqué and butterflies will be set free.

Doug Spowart is a photographer, lecturer and artists' bookmaker. For fifteen years he was director of Imagery Gallery in Brisbane before taking up a full-time teaching position in photoimaging. Spowart's artists' books are included in major collections in Australia including the National Library of Australia. He is currently a PhD candidate at James Cook University where his research question deals with the photobook and its context within the artists' book genre. He can be reached at <Greatdivide@a1.com.au>.



Text/Messages: Books By Artists: An exhibition at the Walker Art Center

By Karen Wirth

Photography by Gene Pittman, Courtesy Walker Art Center

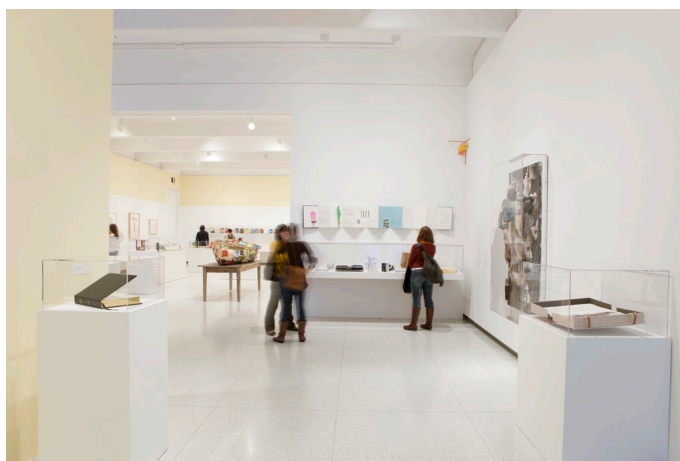
With more than 1,600 artists' books in its collection, the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis is a treasure trove in an area already rich with collections of books and organizations for book lovers. *Text/Messages: Books by Artists* was an entertaining and educational cache that served as an introduction for a wide audience. Co-organized by Walker librarian Rosemary Furtak and curator Siri Engberg, the show was culled from the extensive holdings of the library and the permanent collection. Some 180 works were on display in the Medtronic Gallery from December 18, 2008- April 19, 2009.

The exhibition took a sampler approach with broad appeal, and was predominantly geared towards an audience new to the field. For the more experienced viewer, it was a reminder of the breadth of the collection, usually locked away in permanent storage (some on view for the first time in decades) or available by appointment only in the library. There were books that may have been familiar only through catalogues, and there were thoughtful juxtapositions of works throughout the installation.

The title of the exhibition cleverly circumvents the various nomenclature and punctuation problems that insiders have discussed ad nauseum—artist's or artists' books, book art or arts. It also averts any overt hierarchy by including a wide range of practitioners and objects from blue chip artists whose books are only one facet of their studio practice to local artists whose sole output is books. It incorporated both historical and contemporary examples, prints and book objects, livres d'artistes and multiples. With all that variety, the full title included the Library of Congress call number N7433.4 .W353 A4 2008, which on the LOC online catalogue places the show squarely within artists' book collections, between Franz Erhard Walther's *Organon*, 1983 and Marshall Weber's *Cycle*, 2006.

The frontispiece to the exhibition was David Hammons' *The Holy Bible: The Old Testament*, 2002. The large leather-bound, gilt-edged Bible was housed in a vitrine, its cover propped open to reveal the title page of another book inside: *The Complete Works of Marcel Duchamp, Paperback Edition*, Arturo Schwarz. Essentially an editioned altered book, the work pairs words with The Word, high modernism with a contemporary sense of irony, ideas of the ready-made with an experience of the constructed object, and the tremendous reach of the Bible with the more limited audience of artists' books. Both can be seen as foundational texts. As the introductory work, it sets up a series of dichotomous

questions played out over the course of the exhibition: is it a book or an object, is there a difference between an artists' book and a book by an artist, how does a permanent collection differ from a library collection? While the first two questions were discussed by curators in the interest of newcomers, the last question was not, and is more germane to those with deeper connections to the field.



Commingle in this show, both collections feature books by artists whose art is in the permanent holdings of the Walker. And those artists were well represented: 22 works by Ed Ruscha, 18 by Lawrence Weiner, collected works by Dieter Roth. There were also individual works by Marcel Duchamp, Lucas Samaras and John Baldessari, among the many well known names of modern art featured in the show. There also was a Buzz Spector, A Passage, and Keith Smith's Book 91. Those names suggest a certain bias in exhibition, choices toward the permanent collection's canon and away from the library's quirkiness. The Walker Library, led for 20 years by Rosemary Furtak, reflects her more catholic tastes and strong support of artists for whom books function as primary medium. In a show this broad, a larger selection of works by those artists would have been welcome. The library owns works by Ken Campbell, Clifton Meador, Julie Chen, Claire Van Vliet and countless others that were not seen. There was attention paid to local yet nationally known artists: Jody Williams, Wendy Fernstrum, and Chip Schilling among others. Harriet Bart's *In the Presence of Absence*, is an abstract concept beautifully made physical through laser-cut pages and glass cover. Bart is the recipient of two Minnesota Book Awards for other works not in the show: *The Poetry of*

Chance Encounters and *Garment Registry*. Dave Rathman's *Adventures in the Burning Bush*, adapted from Amos Tutuola's *The Palm-Wine Drinker*, was a fellowship project through the Jerome Foundation/Minnesota Center for Book Arts and Vermillion Editions. While one can always quibble with curatorial choices, the overall selection was heavily weighted towards works of well-known modernists that have had a lot of exposure and art world recognition. This was an opportunity for getting more artists out of the library and into that larger world.

Many of the books chosen built on past exhibitions or on the smaller-scale and kinetic nature of the book. A couple of examples: Kara Walker's *Freedom: A Fable* adds pop-up silhouettes to her black and white cutouts usually presented oversized on a wall. The intimacy of the book, with the pop-up literally jumping from the page into the reader's space, changes the viewer from outside observer to complicit participant. Difficult race relationships are not just the historical past, but also an ongoing present. In Sigmar Polke's *Daphne (mit einem von Reiner Speck)* photographs of hands pull and stretch images of his paintings into striped patterns, a xerographic version of his paint smears on canvas. Were one able to hold the book, the viewer's hands would become the hands in the photographs, acting on the work in a way that would never happen with the painting.

There were quite a few livres d'artistes, most from the permanent collection, with the larger scale beautiful printing and illustration on fine paper, such as: Robert Motherwell's *Ulysses*, letterpress and etching published by Arion Press, Ellsworth Kelly's letterpress and litho *Un Coup des Dés* published by Limited Editions Club New York and Vija Celmins' *The View*, mezzotint and letterpress with text by Czeslaw Milosz, published by Library Fellows of the Whitney Museum of American Art. But equal to these glamorous editions were the ephemeral books by Fluxus artists, who are also very well-represented in the Walker collection: Dick Higgins' *What to Look for in a Book- Physically and Catalogue 1965-66*, a staple-bound pamphlet, and Yoko Ono's *Yoko Ono's Everson Museum Catalogue Box*, a wood origami-like box containing small cards- "Fold this sheet in half 9 times, John Lennon," or "Painting of 1/100th part of Mona Lisa's Mole, Yoko Ono '61."

Aside from these pairings of types within the collection, there were also intriguing relationships made between works in the installation itself. Just as browsing a library shelf allows for unexpected discoveries within a category, so too the placement of works invited comparative readings. Beyond the aforementioned frontispiece, the first gallery space also included a reading room and the first part of the exhibition. The reading area provided a hands-on experience by necessity missing from the rest of the show, and contextualizing information: how-to books, catalogues, JAB magazine, discursive texts by Betty Bright, Johanna Drucker, and Renée Riese Hubert, a variety of 'zines and inexpensive artists'

books. Some of these later could be found for purchase in the museum shop, bringing the show's premise full circle by suggesting to the novice reader/viewer: You too can afford to buy art.

The Ed Ruscha work was displayed opposite the reading area. Fifteen books, almost all of which were shown with the covers closed, and six offset prints

picturing those books floating in gray space were displayed adjacent to Rachel Whiteread's *Untitled (Pulp)*, 1999. Whiteread's plaster and polystyrene sculpture was a cast of the negative space of five bookshelves. The colored foreedges of the missing books slightly stained the plaster. There was a formal connection between white plaster and the white covers of the Ruscha, the floating bookcase and the floating book prints. Conceptually, the closed books denied access to the contents of Ruscha's work, while the absence of the books was the point of Whiteread's.

Next was a series of works whose connection was small size and use of containers. Displayed in one vitrine, they could not be read as a curatorial group in any other way. Jody Williams' *In Here, Out There*, is a small book case; the books pull out like drawers. A string ladder ascends to a window, reading as a means of climbing out of one's own head. Then there were three one-liners: Katherine Ng's *Fortune Ate Me*, letterpress fortune cookies in a pink cookie box, Peter and Donna Thomas' John Steinbeck's *Cannery Row*, with circular accordion pages packed in a tuna can, and two *Gunbooks* by Robert The, found books cut in the shape of handguns. Bookending these works was Xu Bing's *From the Little Red Book of Mao*, a "Message of greetings on 60th birthday of Comrade Yu-Chang" printed on cigarettes encased in a tin



box. Because the grouping in the display case was by size rather than content, there was no sense that this last book is part of a significant body of work that deals with the complex web of the tobacco industry, China, the university, and the artist. It is a reminder that this is a large group show in which works are connected by medium, not message.

Other pairings were more poetic. Philip Barber's *Withdrawing* is a woodcut and rubber-stamped book slip, covered in stamped and written due dates. With a few extra letters, the word WITHDRAWN has been turned into WITHDRAWING. Landscape-like, black woodcut bands are printed over the slip, atmospheric ink smudged in what could be read as layers of the sky. Below is Michelle Stuart's *Every Wave Book (For Melville)*, made of earth and linen, sitting on a bed of sand and rocks. Stones are lined up on the cover like rows of white letters. Landscape, text, image are compressed in both of these works.

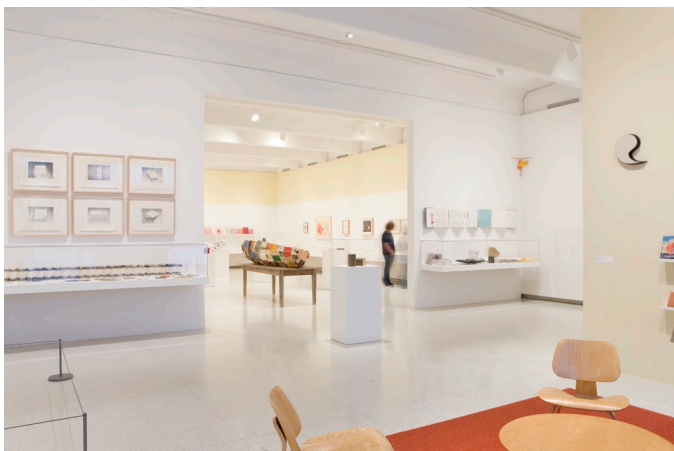
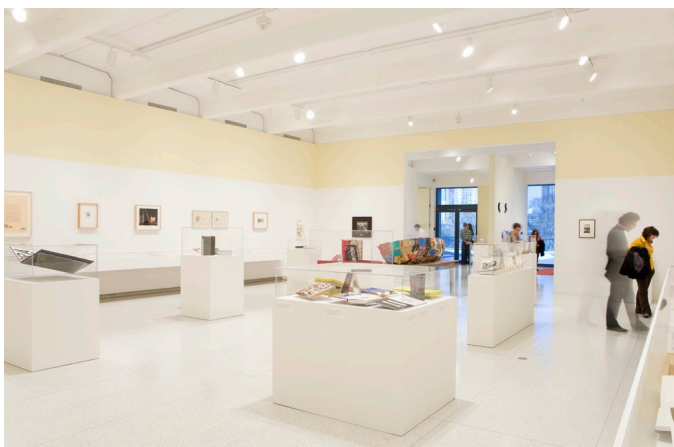
Sculptural works always present well in exhibitions, as the content is fully revealed rather than obscured under covers in glass cases. Two notable sculptural works were *Obras Escogidas (Selected Works)* by Cuban artist Kcho, and *Notepad* by Sarah Sze. *Obras Escogidas* is a large distressed wood table that supports a boat made from used paperbacks lashed to a steel frame with twine. Although it is not touchable, the sculpture's physical presence breaks the monotony of viewing many small things in cases. The paperback book covers are the outer skin of the boat; the open pages line the inside. Like non-functional weatherproofing, newspaper is stuffed into any open space. Knowledge of Spanish isn't necessary to understand that covers with titles such as *Atlas de Cuba*, *Historia de Cuba y Sus Relaciones con Estados Unidos*, *Fundamentos de la Filosofía: Marxista-Leninista* could be read as a socio-political commentary on US/Cuban relations. But both boats and books are also potent symbols of escape and transport to

another state of being, so suggested content has to be weighed against historical events such as Mariel boatlift of 1980, or another mass exodus of Cubans in the summer of 1994, the year this piece was made. Kcho's ambiguous relationship with the Castro government could make these interpretations even less clear.

There is no ambiguity in Sarah Sze's *Notepad*, except for the label: offset color litho, laser engraved paper and board. The offset color litho refers to an ordinary blue-lined writing pad, laser cut with a pattern of tiny rectangles. The pad is thumbtacked to the wall. The sheets of paper are rolled and tucked back, tumbling outward from the pad. The cuttings resemble a paper fire escape and landings, with a ladder extending three feet towards the floor, paper snippets in a puddle below. More of a thing than a book, it is nevertheless an exquisite piece made from very ordinary material.

While the exhibition was the centerpiece, there were many collateral events that kept the show fresh over the course of its four-month run. Among the most successful were a film, a library talk, and a book fair. *Lost Book Found*, a 37-minute film by Jem Cohen was screened in another part of the museum.

The gallery sign described it: "Mesmerizing documentary inspired by the filmmaker's discovery of a mysterious notebook found while working as a pushcart vendor. Its pages filled with obsessive listings of objects, places and incidents, the book influenced Cohen's relationship to NY, and his resulting film sheds light on an underground city, unconsidered geographies, and layered artifacts." The film has a collage sensibility, recreating the memory of the book, while categorizing the city in small quotidian bits and details. Not only is the film about a book, it also reveals its subject like a book.



A Think and a Drink was an evening gallery talk and library show-and-tell that was staged for a smaller group of contributing Walker members. In the library, Rosemary Furtak explained colophons and gave a brief introduction to two types of books, “books that don’t behave like books” and more conservative illustrated books, in essence a microcosm of the larger show upstairs. Viewers were able to handle the books and read them as they should be read. This was a new experience for most of the attendees, some of whom actually squealed with delight. Ideally they took their new-found excitement to the *Multiples Mall: A Bookish Fair*. Tables set up in the Cargill Lounge turned the space into a temporary shop, with artists selling their ‘zines, chapbooks, artists’ books and multiples. Gallery patrons who had never been to a book fair browsed the tables and chatted with living artists. Idiosyncratic, immediate, and affordable, these works were not vetted through the gallery system or passed through the museum’s collection gates. No labels needed, nor white gloves or vitrines. Unusual for an institution such as the Walker, and more commendable for the same reason.

Text/Messages was a terrific introduction to the field of artists’ books, perfect for a new audience but without challenge for a knowledgeable one. It was also a great showcase of the artists represented in the Walker permanent collection, but missed an opportunity to expose other artists in the library collection. Nevertheless, museum shows like this are rare. Here’s hoping that the next one builds from this foundation, assuming more audience sophistication, and challenging them through curatorial risk-taking.

<<http://visualarts.walkerart.org/detail.wac?id=4665&title=Current%20Exhibitions>>

Karen Wirth is an artist and educator whose work has been exhibited extensively, including the Smithsonian Institution and the Walker Art Center. Her book works include offset editions, sculptural pieces, and large-scale installations, all of which led to public art. She is a professor and Chair of Fine Arts at the Minneapolis College of Art and Design. Wirth has received numerous grants, including the fellowships from the Bush and McKnight Foundations, National Endowment for the Arts, Minnesota State Arts Board, and MCBA/Jerome Book Arts. She is a founding board member of the College Book Arts Association. She can be reached at <karen_wirth@mcad.edu>



Book + Art: Handcrafting Artists' Books by Dorothy Simpson Krause

A review by John Cutrone

The late Judith Hoffberg, ever the champion of the artists' book, wrote the foreword to Dorothy Simpson Krause's *Book + Art: Handcrafting Artists' Books*. The foreword itself is brief, but it says a lot. It is, in fact, the perfect place to begin any discussion of the strange animal that is the artists' book, and it is the perfect place to begin a discussion of this particular book: "Every artist has an innate desire to make a book. It involves sequencing, craftsmanship, finesse, but most of all it reflects content and context. No book should just be 'beautiful.' It should say something. It should mean something. And it should cast a wide circle."

Through examples of her own work, Krause acts upon Hoffberg's message in this how-to book that is as much about the content and context of an artists' book as it is about basic book arts technique. This is a real challenge, I think, especially when it comes to books that aim to introduce perhaps curious folks to the world of artists' books. Too many how-to books on the book arts are purely about technique. The result, very often, is many "beautiful" books. And while there's nothing wrong with that (I'm all for the populist attitude of getting people everywhere involved in making books), there is something to be said for making books that actually have something to say—even if you are a beginner.

As someone who spends a lot of time and energy introducing students and the general public to the world of artists' books, it is this focus on content and meaning that I

found most appealing about *Book + Art*. It's a book I could see us selling at the Jaffe Center for Book Arts—a follow-up, of sorts, for those who come to JCBA for the first time and get really hooked. Sure, there are other books out there that do a great job of teaching techniques. But *Book + Art* stands out as a book that is both an excellent how-to book and an engaging read, thoroughly illustrated with photographs of both techniques in process and Krause's finished work. And always, this focus on meaning.

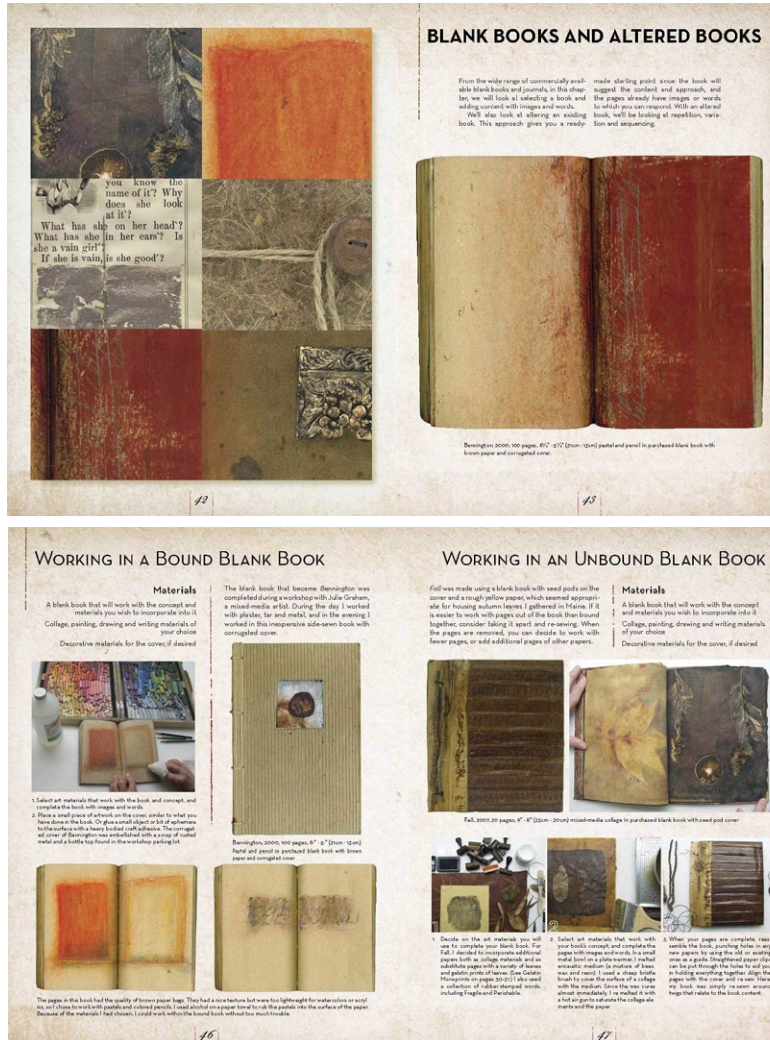
Krause does not tiptoe around technique. She covers

everything from simple accordion structures and single signature pamphlets to more complex things like drumleaf and long stitch bindings and creating boxes. The book is also filled with numerous sideline suggestions, some labeled as "Helpful Hints" ("Make your containers appropriate to the collections they house. Make them as important as their contents.") and some as "Creative Explorations" ("If you're not happy with a print, build up the surfaces. Use it as a layer and print on top of it with another ink color or another image.").

The book also offers a close look at the various mark-making techniques that will help bring these

bindings into that realm of content and meaning. Krause touches on digital imagery, encaustic, transfer techniques and wet and dry media. Mixed in with all this are ideas even seasoned book artists will find valuable: Detailed illustrations on how to create specific knots, for instance, or how to build an inexpensive yet effective piercing cradle.

The projects themselves are detailed, well-explained, and most importantly, doable. It's a frustrating thing for anyone, whether a novice or an expert, to take home a how-to book



and realize that the projects are slightly out of reach. That's not at all the case here. Krause explains the fine details and places each project in reach of the reader's ability.

If there is one thing that bothered me about the book it is the occasional editorial slips: some misplaced punctuation marks, for instance. But as a typographer and book designer, these are the things that jump out at me and call attention to themselves. I'm sure they won't bother most people, but in a book about books, it irks me slightly to see this small lack of care on the publisher's part.

But don't let a few misplaced commas stop you from exploring *Book + Art* further. Krause has done the book arts a great service in writing this book, in just helping people grasp a more concrete idea of just what it is that makes an artists' book an artists' book. And if her book makes only a handful of artists think beyond the book beautiful and more deeply into the concepts of content and meaning, it will have helped that handful of artists create more engaging work. Hopefully it will be more than a handful that have that experience.

John Cutrone is Programs Coordinator for the Jaffe Center for Book Arts at Florida Atlantic University's Wimberly Library. He is also a partner in Convivio Bookworks, a book arts studio specializing in limited edition letterpress printed books and broadsides. He can be reached at <<http://conviviobookworks.com/>>.



Book Dynamics! Ed Hutchins Turns, Twists and Topples Tradition

(Editions. 2009. Hardcover, 96 pages, 184 color photos. ISBN: 978-0-615-27642-7. US \$40.)

A review by Miriam Schaer.

Book Dynamics! is not your typical artist exhibition catalog. It's much more fun. Created to accompany a traveling exhibition celebrating Ed Hutchins' twenty-plus years making artist books, it's a lot like Ed himself — charming, rambling, engaged, and overflowing with delightful projects. It is also a reflection of the artist's periodic calls for political action, by which he means: for fairness and equality, and for justice in the kind of world in which he assumes we would all like to live.

Part memoir, part testimonial, *Book Dynamics!* is handsomely produced and filled with beautifully photographed depictions of his limited-edition bookworks, many revealing details of their design and assembly. The book also nicely captures Hutchins' eclectic, largely cheerful sensibility, even when his topics are politically charged. Bright colors run rampant, so let those whose tastes hew to the minimal be forewarned.

Extensive introductory materials include brief essays by Bertha Rodgers, founder of the Word and Image Gallery in Bright Hill, New York, and poet laureate of New York's Delaware County; C.J. Grossman, Berkeley-based book artist and activist; and William J. Dane, Keeper of Prints and Works of Art on Paper at the Newark Public Library.

A splendid introduction to those unfamiliar with Ed Hutchins, *Book Dynamics!* serves as a celebration to those already smitten by the Hutchins oeuvre. Within a homey, accessible layout, each featured book, like *Lunch*, is presented

showing different views or, like *Mystery of the Magic Box*, different stages of assembly. A back-story for each book adds to the album-like feeling.

Sprinkled throughout are accounts of Ed's financial ups and downs, as well as brief stories of his struggle to keep making books in the face of numerous obstacles. There are also stories about friends who have passed on, and others who delivered unexpected support. A wedding photo of Ed and his spouse Steve Warren, along with a chapter about a year in Mexico, where they explored the culture, connected with local artists, and spread the gospel of making books, add depth and a

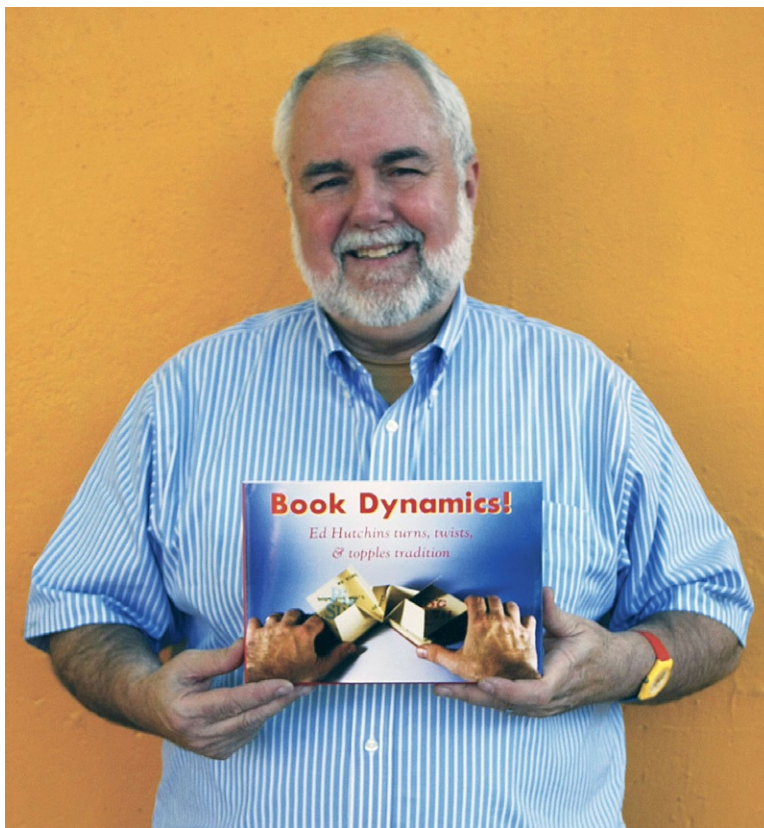
measure of poignancy to this deeply personal catalog.

Book Dynamics! is not a large-scale book, but it feels expansive and devotes at least one or two pages to each of Hutchins' artist books. Hutchins has dedicated himself to making editions, mostly small scale, often with a sculptural element, like a found object, incorporated into the book. In *Do Sit Down*, an accordion book lifts out of the seat of a miniature chair. In *Words for the World*, a small tin box printed with a world map houses a suite of pencils.

Each pencil conveys a message — such as “We

all live under the same sky,” “It doesn't hurt to listen” or “You are part of the plan” — printed on one side in a foreign language like Zulu, Korean or Afrikaans, and on another side in English.

Where Hutchins excels though, is in his complicated folding structures which materialize in an assortment of tunnel books — such as *New York City Transit*, an edition of 15 made from postcards and subway maps — and flexigons, as in *Voces de Mexico* and *Album*. Many of his folded structures interpret and expand on existing forms. *World Peace*, for example, made in response to the first gulf war, is a four-part book made of modified star books arranged to form a circle. Another examples is *Twisted*. A playful reworking



Photograph by Joe Freedman

of the star book form, it required attaching the sections by twisting, then gluing them one quarter turn off axis, causing the pages to rotate as they unfold.

The Magic of the Mystery Box, commissioned as a catalog for an exhibition at the Anchorage Museum of History and Art that celebrated the box as an art form, takes the idea of making a book from a single sheet of paper to an entirely new level. Ed started with a two by three foot sheet of paper, offset printed in four colors on one side and one color on the other (to stay in budget). The sheet was then die-cut and scored so that when folded it transforms into a three-inch square, 17-page book with pop ups, fold outs, and turn downs, plus front and back covers that double as a one-inch deep book box. Magic indeed.

Hutchins' works display a remarkable geniality, even when they have a political edge. It's anti-pretension and unafraid to score points at the expense, or maybe employing the armor, of sweetness. *Gay Myths*, for example, is a small, simple, hand-sewn pamphlet with multiple fold-outs. It was created after the 1993 March on Washington for Gay Rights, and re-issued in 2002. Hutchins uses clip art to illustrate such gay myths as "You can pick us out!... We all love opera!... We hate straights!" and so on.

Hutchins has distributed thousands of copies of *Gay Myths*. They have been included in such publications as *Artsoregon* and the *Lesbian and Gay Employees Newsletter for United Airlines*. And no wonder. Using directness and humor, Ed's simple pamphlet disarms and engages both those who have and have not thought twice about these issues, coaxing readers to consider the lives, feelings and rights of others. It is this quality of benign engagement that makes so many of the books in *Book Dynamics!* worth a closer look.

Hutchins' books appeal to a broad audience. Their idiosyncratic blend of whimsy and social commentary, and affordable prices, often make one of them the first artist book experienced by many of his readers — including children, for whom they hold an undeniable appeal. His books speak directly to kids and are without an ounce of condescension, probably because, like *The Simpsons*, they're written for adults.

Ed himself recounts a day in Tapachula, Mexico when he and Steve, killing time waiting for a bus, decided to get their shoes polished. Besides paying the shoeshine boy, they gave him a copy of *Voces de Mexico*. And off he went, seeking new customers. A little while later, they were besieged by a dozen other kids, all asking for copies of their own.

Book Dynamics! can be ordered online at <<http://www.artistbooks.com/>>.

Miriam Schaer is a multimedia book artist. She has exhibited steadily and extensively in solo and group exhibitions, and her work has been mentioned in a long list of articles and reviews. She is a recipient of a NYFA Artists Fellowship and her work has been included in the Mary H. Dana Women Artists Series at Douglass Library, the oldest and longest-running exhibition series dedicated to showcasing women artists in the United States. Her work can be seen in many public collections including Arts of the Book at Yale University, The Mata & Arthur Jaffe Collection: Book as Aesthetic Object at Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton, Florida, The Sallie Bingham Center for Women's History and Culture at Duke University in Durham NC. Her work can be seen on-line in the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for the Feminist Art Base at the Brooklyn Museum, and at <<http://www.miriamschaer.com>>.

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Welcome to the 2009 Bind-O-Rama

Initiated in 2004, the Bonefolder's Bind-O-Rama challenge and online exhibition have become an annual event. 2009 is no exception and this year we elected to make it an open, i.e. un-themed event. This year 48 entries were received, a record number, with participants ranging from seasoned professionals to first-time exhibitors. Adding to the excitement this year was a very wide range of structures.

Twenty-five selections from those received were curated by Karen Hanmer and Peter Verheyen, and are shown here. All received entries are on display at the Book Arts Web at <<http://www.philobiblon.com/bindorama09>>.

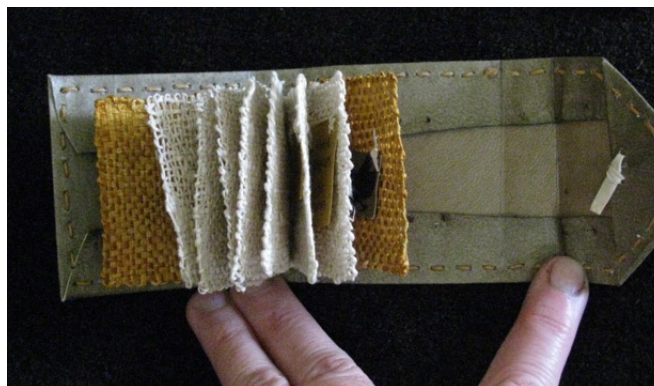
Eric Alstrom, Okemos, MI, USA.



Map Ref 41°N 93°W. Text is the lyrics from the Wire song of the same name (taken from their 1979 album "154"). Images convey the neat grid patterns humans overlay on a very un-grid-like world. The text set in Mistral, laser-printed on Lana Laid paper. Vinyl print monotypes done in oil on a Vandercook. The binding is the False Accordion created by Sandra Reese. Panel cover made from blue Cialux cloth spine, blue Hahnemuhle Bugra and laser printed title on front cover. 17cm x 12cm x 1.5cm.

Eric Alstrom has been involved with the book arts since 1989. He studied under James Craven and also at the Bessenberg Bindery in Ann Arbor, Michigan. He has taken workshops from many bookbinders and artists, including Hedi Kyle, Gary Frost, Tom Balboa and Cecilia Frost. Eric is head of conservation at Michigan State University Libraries and the binding instructor for MSU's book arts program. He also teaches conservation, binding and book arts workshops locally and nationally. For further information, please visit Eric Alstrom | BookWorks at <http://webalstrom.ftml.net/bookworks>.

Velma Bolyard, Canton, NY, USA



This Day. Binding in dyed vellum, with two spine tackets and braided linen closure wrapped around a vellum button; pages are 4-selvage shifu (spun and woven paper) of lokta paper with vellum for the hand written ink text of a poem. they are sewn with linen on two vellum tapes which are tacketed to the spine. 6 x 6 x 11 1/2 cm. Collection of Owen DYoung Special Collections Library at St. Lawrence University.

Eclectic binding training from various workshops including Jim Crofts old ways, visual studies workshop, and 2 Paper Book Intensives (PBI. Recipient of Nell Mendell scholarship to PBI, and have received a NYSCA SOS grant. BS in design and textiles, and a masters and certification in elementary, art, and special education. Her hand paper mill is called Wake Robin.

Pauline A. Braun, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada



Tunnel Book - The intaglio prints within the book are pulled from two etched copper plates. The front and back boards are covered with paste paper. The accordion folded side panels are vellum. The book measures 15 x 15 x 45 cm (extended).

Braun has no formal education or training in bookbinding/ book arts.

Bexx Caswell, Medford, MA, USA



Leaves of Grass by Walt Whitman; Illustrations by Jim Spanfeller. Hallmark, 1969. Rubow style millimeter binding with black Harmatan goatskin at the head and tail. rolled leather endbands, handmade paste paper, black Fabiano Ingres endsheets. The paste paper was created especially for this binding, with the intent of capturing the feel of the book's illustrations without mimicking them. 19.5 x 11.8 x 1.3 cm.

Caswell trained under Mark Andersson and Jeff Altepeter at the North Bennet Street School. She also holds an M.S. in Library Science with a focus in Preservation Management from Simmons College. Recently served at the Lennox Preservation Intern at Iowa State University.

Linda M. Cunningham/Lasqueti Pres, Calgary, AB, Canada



Horizon – Flag book with deerskin cover; goatskin lace and woolly mammoth ivory closure; Fabiano Ingres paper spine; inkjet-printed Canson Rag Photographique 210 gm flags; hide and PVA glues; double-sided permanent Scotch tape. 8 x 13 x 1.5 cm (closed), 69 x 13 x .25 cm (open)

An internationally exhibited installation and fibre artist, with a Master of Environmental Design degree from The University of Calgary, Linda has supplemented her experimental approach to artists' books by partaking in formal studies with Don Rash.

Patricia Grass, Forest Grove, OR, USA



Steep Trails: Writings About Oregon by John Muir. Sewn on cords, laced on covers made of myrtlewood, native to Oregon, spine covered with hand tooled calf, pre-sewn headbands. The book was designed using the page layout program *Ready, Set, Go* on a Macintosh G5 computer and printed directly from the computer on a Konica Minolta Color Copier on Mohawk Superfine paper. The typeface is Caslon, the initial letters are Caslon combined with reworked clip art letters from Dover. The photographs are by the binder and her family. The design of the book incorporates Muir's writings from the late 1800's with comments by Lewis and Clark from the early 1800's and modern day photographs of Oregon. The book was produced in an edition of 25. 2009 marks the 150th anniversary of Oregon. 8 x 13.5 x 2.5 cm.

BA in Biology, MS in Education, BFA in Painting. My bookbinding education comes from classes and workshops at Oregon School of Arts and Crafts in the 1970's and 80's (before it granted degrees) and workshops with various teachers and conferences such as the PBI and Guild of Book Workers.

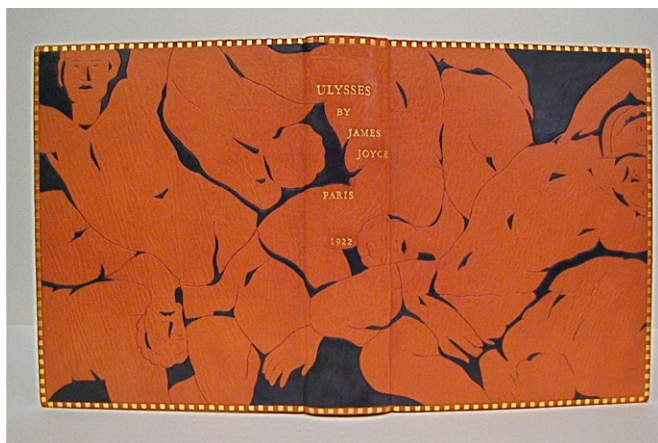
Dolores Guffey, Eureka, CA, USA



My hand marbled paper adorns the front cover of this blank book. The book was sewn on tapes using a stitch shown in *Bookbinding and the Care of Books* by Douglas Cockerell (1925 edition). I thought the sewing pattern too attractive to hide behind a spine (the purpose of the stitch is to avoid undue looseness in the sewing processes), so I made it part of the overall design of an exposed spine binding. Each signature was wrapped with a 1 inch wide strip of marbled paper to give the spine a more decorative appearance. 14.5 x 11 x 2.5 cm.

I have been a marbler since 1976 and am one of the founding members of the North Redwoods Book Arts Guild (founded in 1995 by Shereen LaPlantz and others). I enjoy teaching and have taught numerous book arts workshops in California and Oregon.

Jamie Kamph, Stonehouse Bindery Lambertville, NJ, USA



Ulysses, by James Joyce. Bound in tan Oasis goatskin with design of interlocked bodies outlined in (onlaid) blue goatskin. Gold-tooled border and titling on spine. Marbled

endpapers; original paper covers bound in. 24 x 18 x 5 centimeters. Bound 2008.

Trained under Hope Weil in New York City.

Joanne Kluba, St. Louis, MO, USA



Millimeter binding with goat leather trim; Acrylic ink painted Arches text wove paper with Mohawk Superfine text pages, a lined journal printed on a laser printer. 21 x 15 x 1 cm.

Joanne Kluba has been binding books since 1993, when she began studying with Richard Baker, Conservator, in St. Louis. Joanne has attended the Paper and Book Arts Intensive 2 years (so far). Joanne has a BFA in Printmaking from Webster University, St. Louis, along with professional Graphic Arts experience (15 years). Joanne runs a small bookbinding and book arts business called Paper Birds since 2002, where she creates fine custom books and boxes, preservation boxes, and art books. She teaches at her studio and at Craft Alliance, in University City, Missouri.

Barbara Maloutas, Los Angeles, CA, USA



Basic Division Facts. Hardbound flag book, accordion spine, found flashcards, handwriting, and metal stamping. Keeping the book's numbering without regard to chapters, I hand-wrote arithmetic problems from Primary Arithmetic by David Eugene Smith, Ph.D., published in 1904. The problems were handwritten in black. I calculated and hand-wrote the solutions in red and indicated the solutions by circling them. When the answer was correct, I filled in a golden circle by hand. All calculating occurs on division flashcards. Words from and commentary on the textbook are hand-stamped on the flash cards and debossed. 17.5 x 12 cm.

1972: BFA: University of the Arts in Graphic Design 1994: studied Book Arts with Carolee Campbell at Otis College of Art and Design 2003: MFA: Otis College of Art and Design in Creative Writing

Charlene Matthews, Los Angeles, CA, USA



Loaded. (Dream Holes/Faye in L.A.). Black Pergameta goat covered boards, pin-hole photo and window screen on-lays, wire and blind tooling. Pin-hole images with digital alteration/silkscreen alteration/darkroom alteration/spray paint alteration on full size Frankfurt white paper. 10 window

screen signatures undersized (edges sewn with yellow pyro-lace) 10 hand typed signatures undersized (Faye in L.A.) with collage pasted and sewn throughout. Sewn on split vellum thongs, split boards, handmade paste paper paste-downs, cloth hinges with wire attachments. 9x11" Artist Proof of an edition of 5.

Charlene Matthews is a full time bookbinder, working in restoration, box making, art fabrication and book arts. Her work can be found worldwide. She is also crazy about her oatmeal box pin-hole camera. Website at <<http://www.charlenematthews.com>>.

Anna Mavromatis, Houston, TX, USA



The Language They Gave Me is a flag structure alphabet book. I used my native language's Greek alphabet and verses from a poem by Odysseus Elytis and the english translation by Edmund Keeley and George Savidis. I feel these verses express something I have experienced most of my life, since the day I left my homeland: the importance and emotional priority we give to our language; for me this alphabet is also an iconic representation of my roots. Flag structure, mixed media, archival pigmented inkjet prints Covered in Rives lightweight, spine: Strathmore 400 series, flags: Epson heavyweight. Closed: 21 x 16 x 2 cm, open: 21 x 85 cm.

Bookbinding training from the Glassell School of Art, MFA Houston

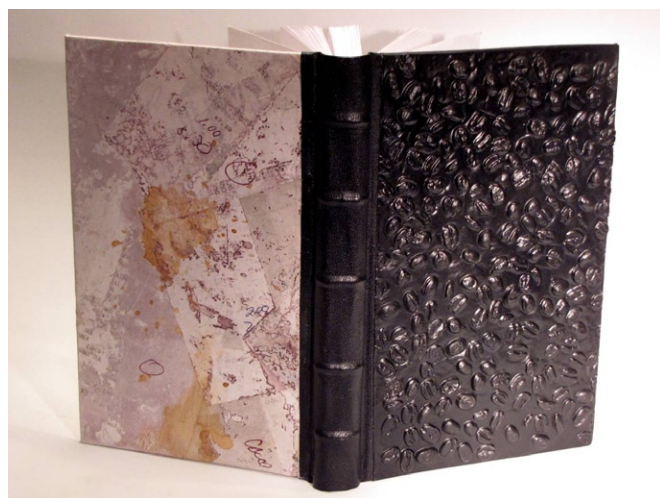
Hanne Niederhausen, Boca Raton, FL, USA



The Three Goals, etchings, poem by David Budbill, silkscreened cover paper, cloth connected hardcovers. 22 x 12.5 x 1 cm.

BFA with the area of concentration in printmaking at Florida Atlantic University, book arts workshops at the Jaffe Center for Book Arts in Boca Raton, FL and the Bundesakademie in Wolfenbüttel, Germany.

Marie Philomena Noorani, Richland, WA, USA



Coffee Book (Blank Book). Tight back binding on raised cords. The back cover features a collage of old coffee shop receipts and coffee stains; front cover features black painted aluminum with coffee bean repousse, the spine "coffee proof" imitation leather (100% cotton with coating). 21.6 x 14 cm.

Marie Philomena Noorani is a self taught bookbinder having learned from several instructional texts and through trial and error. She has been binding for four years working with a wide array of materials in a variety of formats.

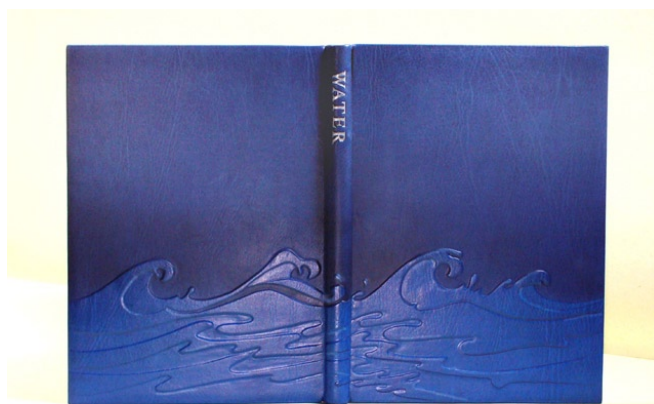
Jim Norton, Athens, GA, USA



Pinwheel Book. Etched Copper with Patina. 18.5 x 18.5 x 1.5 cm.

MFA University of Georgia in Jewellery & Metals 2007.

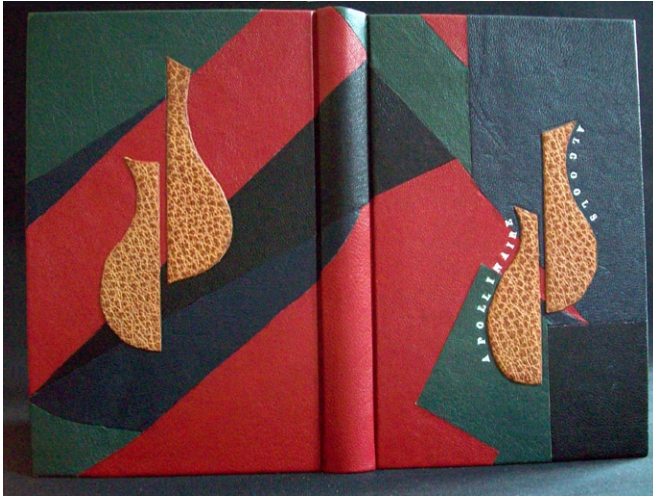
Jana Pullman, Minneapolis, MN, USA



Water. Boards covered in blue goatskin over raised wave design with airbrush toning. Top edge decorated with sprinkled patterns. Sewn two color silk endbands. Title hand tooled in aluminum leaf. Chiryo gami printed endpapers. 27 x 19.5 x 1.8 cm.

Student of Jim Dast, University of Wisconsin-Madison, and Bill Anthony, University of Iowa. MFA in printmaking with an emphasis in book arts and papermaking. Worked for libraries and institutions in book and paper conservation and now I am in private practice.

Georg Rehage; Freiburg, Germany

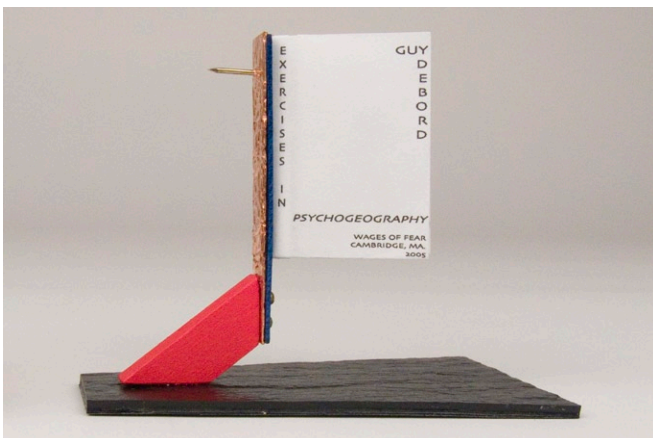


Full leather binding (German case binding) from Guillaume Apollinaire, *Alcools: Poems 1898-1913*. Paris: Gallimard, 1959.

Bound in goat skin with onlays in buffalo skin. Hand-titled in white. Flyleaf of Annonay paper. The binding recalls cubistic forms – the poet and art critic Apollinaire had many friends among the cubistic painters; Picasso for example made a cubistic portrait of the author for the first edition of *Alcools* in 1913. Dimensions: 19,4 x 13 x 2,6 cm.

Georg Rehage has followed several bookbinding workshops in Germany and France. <<http://chienquiboite.over-blog.com/>>

James Reid-Cunningham, Cambridge, MA, USA



Guy Debord, *Exercises in Psychogeography*, Cambridge, MA, 2005. *Exercises in Psychogeography* was composed in QuarkXPress and printed on digital kozo paper using an inkjet printer and pigment inks. Each page is folded twice, requiring the reader to slowly unfold the text. It was designed and printed by James Reid-Cunningham, and each copy of the

edition received a unique binding. This copy was bound with rubber, basswood colored with acrylics, nylon thread, copper, brass, blue goatskin. 8.2 x 10.2 x 6.3 cm.

James Reid-Cunningham studied bookbinding with Mark Esser at the North Bennet Street School in Boston. He is the chief conservator of the Boston Athenaeum, and president of the Guild of Book Workers.

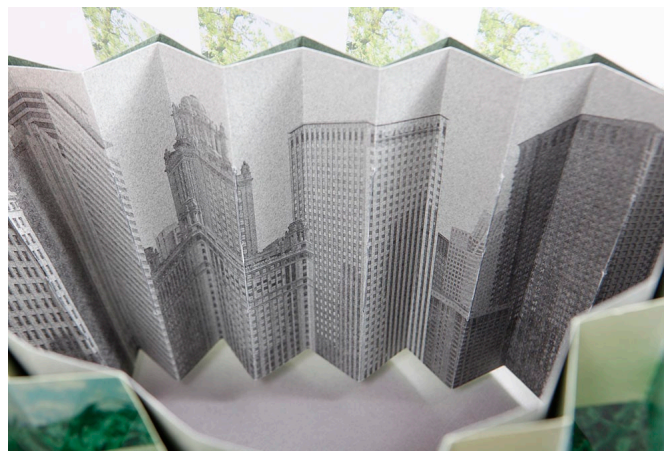
Beth I. Robinson, Cottage Grove, OR, USA



Persian rug pattern sewn in decorative stitch on spine of recontextualized found materials (I pulled apart one book and from it made this one with the box and everything but thread). 13 x 9.5 x 10.2 cm (in box together).

BFA from Oregon College of Art and Craft in Bookarts

Jana Sim, Chicago, IL, USA

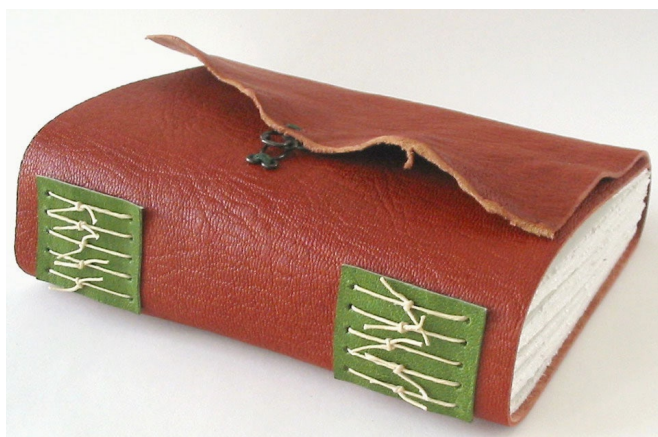


Nesting Place. Double sided variation on flag book with two tray box. Letterpress printed of building scene from photopolymer plates on grey paper and book cloth. Green tree and corn field printed on transparency paper from Laser printer. 15 x 15 x 23 cm.

The Bonefolder: an e-journal for the bookbinder and book artist

Jana Sim is working towards her MFA in Book and Paper program at Columbia College Chicago, and received her BFA in painting from University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign.

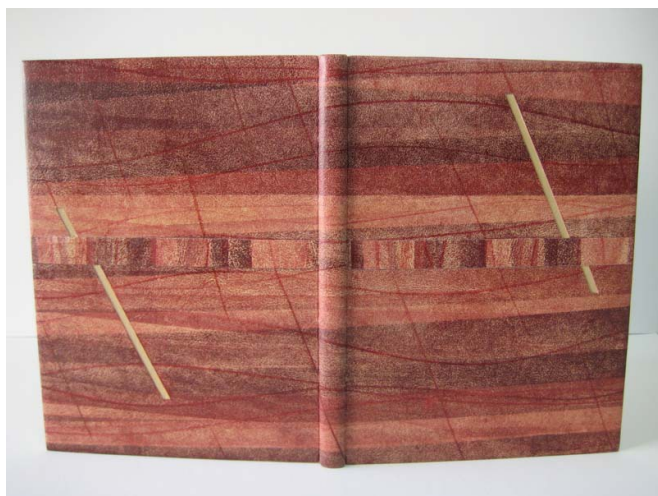
Barbara Simler, Kamloops, BC, Canada



Limp leather binding. Terra Cotta goatskin, sewn with tacks on pieces of green goatskin. Hook and eye closure. Canson text paper. 11 x 14.6 x 3 cm.

Barbara Simler is originally from Woodland, Idaho. Her education in book arts is mostly the result of her own investigations, and more recently she has also studied bookbinding with Jim Croft and Elsi Vassdal Ellis. For the past four years, she has owned and operated Moon Bindery, a book arts studio in Kamloops, BC, Canada. <<http://www.moonbindery.com>>.

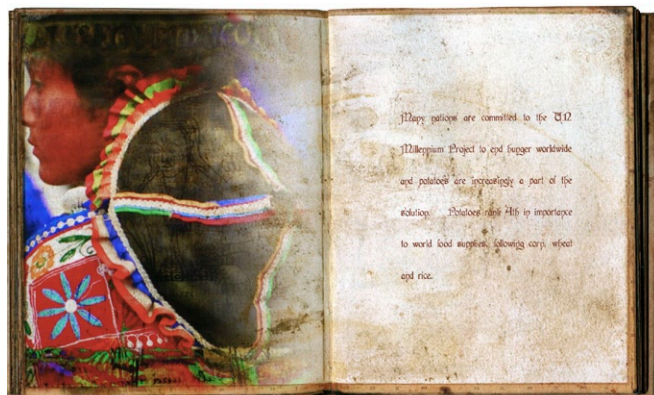
Eduardo Tarrico, Buenos Aires, Argentina



Stub binding in French construction. Hand painted leather decorated with raised and recessed onlays. Canson paper doublure and suede flyleaf. Second Prize winner in Fine Binding category in the International Competition 2009 of The Society of Bookbinders. 24 x 16 x 2.5.

Bookbinder since 2001. Start the studies in Buenos Aires, Argentina. In 2006 travel to Spain to realize a workshop in the Camacho's studio. Actually continues experimentation of structures and decorative techniques. <<http://www.todoencuadernacion.com.ar/>>.

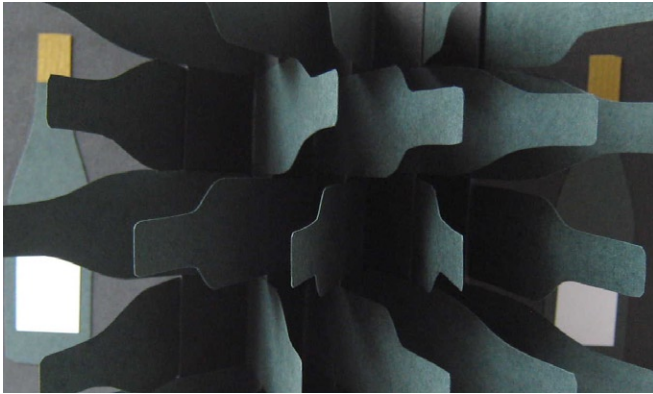
Mary Taylor, Marshfield, MA, USA



Chuño. Hand sewn over tapes binding, 80 pages with original images and text. Covers book board wrapped with inkjet printed onto paper-backed polyester fabric, toned with walnut ink. Pages inkjet pigment printed on archival matte paper, toned with walnut ink and copper and bronze pigments. Pages are filled with sepia toned photographs of Machu Picchu, scenes from the Sacred Valley Peru and combined with Taylor's original art images. The text relates the contemporary international significance of the lowly potato and its historic origins within the Andes. Created in an edition of 10. 19 x 13.25 x 2.5 cm.

My artistic training has come from years of daily immersion working with mentor, professional artist Dorothy Simpson Krause. Throughout the past decade I've managed Krause's studio and we've assisted each other in the development of processes. I love to experiment and expand my artistic training by taking workshops from other artists; Beverly Carreiro, Ana Cordeiro, Maureen Cummins, Shanna Leino, Peter Madden, Scott McCarney, Mary McCarthy, Sharon McCartney, Keith Smith, Donald Glaister, Stephanie Stigliano, Wendy Hale Davis, Marcia Ciro, Kitty Maryatt, and Laura Wait.

Lizanne van Essen, Cambridge, England.



Alcoholism is a flag book with accordion spine and bottle shaped flag pages made of thin black card (which also covers the thick card covers), with collaged bottles glued on. The anonymous bottles of the book signify that any alcohol will do, whilst the massed ranks of empty bottles portray the increased consumption needed to obtain the desired effect as increased tolerance for alcohol grows. 15.5 x 11 x 1.5 cm.

I studied for an Art and Design degree but my bookmaking was largely self-taught from books and experimentation.

Merike van Zanten, Acton, ME, USA



Inside my House is Safe. Book board, covered both sides with original 1922 house deeds, land surveys, conveyance report, site registration and duties receipt of artist's former cottage in England. Brass hinges and latches. Coptic binding of artist's discarded notebooks, journals, photographs and drawings. 22.5 x 22.5 x 16.5 cm.

Self-taught with local courses in Massachusetts and Center for the Book Arts, NY, Susan King's Ideas for Artist Books workshop, Shakerag 2009, and Vandercook Letterpress printing training EM Letterpress, New Bedford 2003-2006.

Classes in the Book Arts with Susan Bonthron at Otter Pond Bindery



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M I N S K Y . C O M

Submission Guidelines

The *Bonefolder* welcomes submissions of articles for publication. Articles should relate to the fields of bookbinding, book arts, decorative techniques, education, exhibition reviews, tips & tricks, or book reviews. Articles that have not been published elsewhere will be given first consideration.

The language of the *Bonefolder* is English, though it may be possible to work with authors in the translation of non-English articles.

Because the *Bonefolder* is published electronically we are able to reach a worldwide audience at minimal cost. Issues will be released as PDF files which can be opened with Adobe Acrobat Reader.

Submitting your text

Only completed articles should be submitted to the editorial review board. This includes proof-reading. Please indicate position of graphics in text by placing the filename of the image in brackets, i.e. [AuthorLastname-Image1.tif].

Articles may be included either as plain text in email letters, or as word processor files attached to email letters. Microsoft Word or WordPerfect are the preferred file formats. Formatting should be very basic with italics, bold, and other formatting used sparingly. Please do not use any "tables." Font should be either Arial or Times Roman. Images can be included in the JPG or TIF formats. Images should be sized to 1024 x 768 pixels if taken with a digital camera. If scanned or created digitally, save at 400 dpi. Line art should be saved as bitonal, b/w images as 8 bit (256 shades of grey), and color as 24 bit. DO NOT embed images in body of text, but save separately and attach. Likewise, collaged images are not allowed.

Files should be named as follows

The article (if not sent in email message body):

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Images:

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References

Any references should be included in () following the text they refer to. If links are included, you must include the full URL, including "http://" enclosed in "<>".

Examples:

Middleton, Bernard C. (1996). *A History of English Craft Bookbinding*, New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Press.

Etherington, Don and Matt Roberts (1982). *Bookbinding and the Conservation of Books: A dictionary of descriptive terminology*. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office. <<http://palimpsest.stanford.edu/don/don.html>>

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The deadline for the Spring 2010 issue is March 15.